American Policy in Korea, 1867-1954

Ernest Gilman
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses
Part of the History Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/masters_theses/3855
AMERICAN POLICY IN KOREA, 1867-1954

by

Ernest Gilman

A thesis presented to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
Degree of Master of Arts

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
June, 1965
PREFACE

This paper shall describe and analyze United States' policy towards Korea from 1834, when American attention was first attracted to that country because of possible trade opportunities, to 1954, which saw the completion of the Geneva Conference on Korea. Throughout this period American policy was neither static, nor was it ever well defined. During this span of one hundred and twenty years American policy in Korea falls logically into two main periods:

1) the initial period from 1834 to 1943 during which time America's primary concern was the establishment and maintenance of the "Open Door" policy;

and ii) the second period from 1943 to 1954 when the American Government attempted to establish an independent Korea,—this latter period may be subdivided into three phases:

(a) the period of military occupation which was intended to establish a trusteeship over Korea, 1943-1947;

(b) the emergence of two Koreas, 1948-1950; and

(c) the Korean War and post-war diplomacy, 1950-1954.
I) 1834-1943

From 1834 until 1881 the United States tried to open Korea to foreign trade. After accomplishing their goal in 1882 by obtaining a commercial agreement, American policy-makers followed a course of action which has been described as the "Open Door" policy. Throughout this period Korean nationalists tried to enlist Washington's aid in the establishment of a modern nation, but the State Department believed that it should not interfere in Korea's internal situation as long as American citizens and their property were properly treated. Washington was constantly reprimanding its representatives in the Korean capital for taking too great an interest in the affairs of the Korean people.

While Americans residing in Korea gained the respect of the native population, and received numerous commercial contracts, the possible expansion of American influence was hampered by Washington's directives restricting the actions of its field representatives. There was constant bickering between the State Department, which came to believe that Korea was unimportant to American interests in the Far East, and members of its legation in Seoul, who believed that American prestige could be enhanced by a policy of assisting the Koreans to modernize.
their country. This bickering came to an end in 1905 when the American legation was closed and the United States acquiesced in Japanese domination of Korea.

The United States then recognized Japan's dominant position in Korea during the latter part of the Russo-Japanese War and took a favorable view of Tokyo's annexation of Korea in 1910. For the next thirty-three years the American Government treated Korea as a province of the Japanese Empire. But Japan's policy of expansion in the Orient, which was to bring her to war with the United States, caused Washington to decide in 1943, that an independent Korea conformed more to American needs and aspirations.

ii) 1943-1954

During these eleven years the United States, in various ways sought to create an independent Korea.

(a) 1943-1947: The main developments of this period were the Allied attempt to establish a trusteeship; the division of Korea at the 38th parallel; the American-Soviet occupation; and the Korea's negative response to trusteeship. During these four years the foundations were established for the "cold war", and Korea became an ideological battlefield. Since neither the Americans nor the Russians retreated in their attempts to establish a unified Korea under a government loyal to their respective viewpoints, the peninsula remained
divided. In accordance with Washington's changing attitude towards the Soviet Union, it was decided that the American policy concerning Korea might be strengthened through collective security.

(b) 1948-1950: With the realization that the American occupation had failed to establish a stable society in the south; that Korea was indefensible; that Communist influence was growing throughout the peninsula; and that the Soviets would never accept a unified Korea under a government loyal to Washington; the Americans decided to leave Korea. And with the aid of the United Nations, Washington was able to create in the American zone of occupation, the Republic of Korea; a vocal enemy of Communism. Despite continuing American financial support the course of the new nation was marked by continuing economic and political instability.

(c) 1950-1953: During this period the United States fought a war in order to defend the Republic of Korea from Communist domination. Having failed to unify the peninsula forcibly because of Communist Chinese interference; and fearing that the war would spread to other areas of the globe, the United States accepted the military stalemate and a return to the status quo ante bellum.

During the latter period of American-Korean relations, Washington has had to contend with a new
factor, that of aggressive Korean nationalism. Although Korean national aspirations had little, if any, effect on State Department decisions during the first period of American interest in that country the situation has been markedly different since 1945. Because of the growing Communist threat to American interests in Asia the South Koreans have been able to obtain increasing American assistance and as South Korea received more American assistance, Korean nationalism has tended to become more and more aggressive. This extremist character of Korean nationalism has had a definite influence on American policy, particularly after the advent of the Korean War.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>THE OPEN DOOR POLICY, 1867-1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Opening of Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foote, Rebellion, and Failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fouk Interlude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;We Cannot Interfer in Internal Political Matters&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Japan, Russia, and Dr. Horace Allen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Washington Acknowledges the Japanese Ascendancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Challenge to Japanese Supremacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Fruits of Victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>ALLIES CONFER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Division at the 38th Parallel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Moscow Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joint Conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>THE MILITARY OCCUPATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Americans Return to Korea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Abandonment of Trusteeship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establishing the New State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to Survive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unification or Death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER</td>
<td>PAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Attack</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V THE KOREAN WAR</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The American View of the War: June, 1950</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Defense of South Korea</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The United Nations Moves North and the Chinese Communists Move South</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truman vs. MacArthur</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Coming of Peace</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI CONCLUSION</td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE OPEN DOOR POLICY, 1867-1945

The Opening of Korea

In the nineteenth century Korea, The Hermit Kingdom, was still regarded as part of the Chinese Empire, although the peninsula had secured internal independence early in the seventeenth century.¹ For many years Korea had remained isolated from the outside world, but during the third quarter of the nineteenth century she began to attract the attention of nations interested in economic and political expansion. At first, Japan, Russia, and France attempted to open Korea through diplomatic channels, but when the Koreans refused to recognize the representatives of these states, more aggressive tactics were adopted. It was at this time that the United States first became seriously interested in Korea because of reports that American seamen, who for one reason or another had fallen under Korean jurisdiction, were being subjected to various indignities and maltreatment.

Although Americans first acknowledged the existence of Korea in 1834 the first overt expression of this interest came in 1867 when Commodore Robert W. Shufeldt of the United States Navy was sent to investigate the disappearance of the American schooner General Sherman, and to inquire about the possibility of initiating trade between Korea and the United States. He was instructed to make contact with Korean officials. But nobody acknowledged the presence of his ship off the Korean coast, he returned home. Four years later growing American interest in the Far East encouraged the State Department to make another attempt to obtain trading rights in Korea, this time by force. But the Chinese government learned of the new plan and informed the Korean monarch, Kojong, who strengthened his country's defenses and stood ready to repulse the warlike advances.

---

2 Samuel Flagg Bemis, American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy (New York: Henry Holt and Co., Inc., 1959), p. 346. American interest had been aroused when a State Department official travelling in the Far East in 1834, expressed the belief that trade talks should be initiated between the United States and Japan, and Korea. Such a resolution was proposed in the House of Representatives a decade later but it was defeated, and Shufeldt was not despatched to investigate the fate of the General Sherman until 1867, when Secretary of State William H. Seward heard that France intended to establish a protectorate over Korea. U.S. Department of State. A Historical Summary of United States--Korean Relations. Publication 7446, Far Eastern Series 115 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 3. It was later discovered that the crew of the General Sherman had fired over the heads of a Korean investigating party which consequently became very inhospitable. Ibid., p. 45.
of the upstart barbarians from the new world.  

In the spring of 1871, an American task force of six ships, commanded by Admiral John Rodgers, and bearing the American ambassador to China, Frederick F. Low, appeared off the coast of the Hermit Kingdom. It proceeded inland, along the Salee River, towards the capital city of Seoul where it was fired upon by Korean shore batteries. The return fire played havoc with the Korean defenses, destroying five of the Korean forts and killing the entire complement of guards at one of them. Since nobody came to talk to the Americans—the Koreans were afraid to approach the death-dealing invaders—Rodgers returned to China in accordance with his orders.

After this unhappy venture American interest remained dormant for several years, until it was aroused in the late 1870's by Japanese commercial activities in Korea. During the 1870's Japan had sought unsuccessfully to obtain trading privileges in Korea, but it was not until 1876 when Japan threatened an attack on Seoul

---


4Ibid., 212.

that the Korean government obliged the Japanese with the treaty of Kanghwa. This Japanese breakthrough encouraged the United States to seek a similar arrangement.

American overtures to Korea in 1880 used a familiar agent but a new tactic. Commodore Shufeldt sought to obtain a favorable response from the Korean government by approaching it with the assistance of Peking officials. This maneuver was momentarily stymied when Peking demanded American acceptance of Chinese suzerainty over the Hermit Kingdom as the price for their aid. But this obtuseness was offset by the actions of the Chinese Governor-General, Li Hung Chang, who encouraged the Koreans to accept trade with the Occidentals in order to counter-balance the growing Japanese influence in Seoul. The almost immediate result of this policy was the so-called Shufeldt Treaty between the United States and Korea which was signed on May 22, 1882.

---

6Hugh Borton, Japan's Modern Century (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1955), p. 163. In April, 1878, a Senator from California proposed that a committee be established to open talks with the Koreans using the Japanese as intermediaries, but this plan was not adopted at that time. U.S., Department of State, A Historical Summary of United States--Korean Relations, p. 4.

The treaty's main emphasis was on commerce and the American right to extraterritoriality. Article one of the treaty provided that: "there shall be perpetual peace and friendship between the President of the United States and the King of Chosen [Korea] and the citizens and subjects of their respective governments." 

The agreement also recognized that "if other Powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices, . . . to bring about an amicable arrangement. . . ." Following the signing, the United States and Korea exchanged representatives in 1883. A retired general, Lucius H. Foote, was despatched to Seoul and Washington received Min Yung-ik, who headed the Korean group which came to witness the ratifying of the treaty.

Foote, Rebellion, and Failure

Washington's main concern in Korea stemmed from American interests in trade possibilities, while Korean acceptance of the Shufeldt Treaty was motivated more

---


9Ibid., p. 4.

by the desire of Korean nationalists to escape from their Chinese tutelage with the aid of American influence. This trust for America resulted from Washington's negative attitude toward aggression and intervention. Unlike the other nations involved in the Far East, the United States had not yet claimed any territory. The signing of the treaty increased the influence of the pro-Japanese liberals who were able to replace the pro-Chinese conservatives in the Seoul government.

Washington's attitude toward Korea was clearly stated in the instructions received by General Foote from Secretary of State Frederick T. Frelinghuysen. The State Department wanted no part of the Sino-Korean conflict, and explained that "we have no desire to interfere unless action should be taken prejudicial to the rights of the United States."11 "As far as we are concerned Corea is an independent sovereign power, ... ."12 The instructions continued:


Briefly then your mission is
1st. To exchange the ratifications of the Treaty.
2d. To cultivate friendly relations with the Government and people of Corea.
3d. To report fully as to the relations of Corea, China and Japan that appropriate steps may be taken to secure for our citizens the privileges granted to the Chinese in the Commercial Regulations.
4th. To inform the Department fully as to all matters of political importance or of interest to those engaged in commerce.

This note, with its emphasis on commercial relations and non-involvement in Korean politics, became the guiding principle behind American--Korean relations for the next twenty-one years.

The basis for subsequent dealings between Washington and Seoul were further clarified in a letter from King Kojong in which he acknowledged the responsibilities of the Shufeldt Treaty. But the Korean monarch's view on the dimensions of his sovereignty was less distinct. He wrote that, "The Chou Hsein country [Korea] is a dependency of China, but the management of her governmental affairs, home and foreign, has always been rested in the sovereign." 14

Although the American State Department was not noted for the high caliber of its personnel during this

13 Ibid., p. 376.
14 McCune and Harrison, p. 25.
period, Foote proved to be an able representative who effectively advanced further American trade and American popularity in Korea. Arriving in Seoul on May 13, 1883, Foote witnessed the opening of the ports of Inchon and Won-san to American trade, as stipulated in the Shufeldt treaty. In the following year the scope of this trade was enlarged by the signing of a more extensive commercial agreement. A short time later the United States Department of Agriculture set up the "American Farm" about ten miles east of Seoul. It was a showcase of American agricultural methods. Nor did Foote ignore the American investor, securing American participation in mining ventures, railroad construction, streetcar systems, an electric power plant, and a public telephone system.

Foote's ability was recognized by King Kojong who sought the American's advice on several important questions concerning treaty revisions with the English and the Germans even though he knew Foote's instructions forbade him to become involved in Korea's internal political

15 Weems, p. 232.
17 Weems, p. 232.
18 Chung, p. 168.
affairs.\textsuperscript{19} The American representative upheld the letter of his instructions and refused to advise Kojong, but he did forward the royal plea to Washington. Kojong's overture to the State Department not only asked for advice on negotiation of the aforementioned treaties, but also asked for assistance in establishing a modern foreign service and in reforming the army.\textsuperscript{20}

Foote proved to be the exception to the rule that the State Department was a group of incompetents.\textsuperscript{21} Though his individual actions enhanced American prestige he did not always accomplish this by following his instructions from Washington, and in many instances gave Kojong a distorted view of American policy in Korea. Such an incident occurred when Kojong's chief adviser, a retired German officer named von Mollendorf\textsuperscript{22} accused the United States of having only financial interests in Korea. Foote seemingly forgot his instructions

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19}McCune and Harrison, p. 32.
\item \textsuperscript{20}Ibid., p. 53.
\item \textsuperscript{21}There were few, if any, Far Eastern specialists in Washington. A typical blunder made by the State Department was when it misplaced the Korean monarch's request for military advisors.
\item \textsuperscript{22}Andrew C. Nahm, "Korea's Response to International Rivalries in the Nineteenth Century." A paper read at the Michigan Academy of Arts and Sciences Convention at East Lansing, Michigan, March 27, 1964. (Mollendorf's surname could not be located.)
\end{itemize}
and replied:

Mr. Minister, I desire to say a few words. The Treaty between the United States and Corea, was ratified by my Government when Great Britain and Germany declined to ratify a similar treaty. It was accepted with no thought of commercial gain. My country cares very little for your commerce, Sir. The treaty was ratified because the United States thought it might be of some service, to Corea, in entering upon her new relations with the World. . .

The American representative's exchange with Mollendorf attracted the attention of a group of young Korean nationalists, who sought Foote's assistance in their plan to oust the conservative pro-Chinese advisors of King Kojong. Foote, however, was disinclined to engage in so blatant a violation of his instructions. Rebuffed by the Americans, the nationalists turned to the much weaker Japanese who plotted with them the overthrow of the conservatives, (and their financial and political benefactor) the Chinese President, Yuan Shih-kai. But the revolt failed, and the pro-Chinese clique moved to reduce the increasing non-Chinese influence at Kojong's court.

---

23 McCune and Harrison, p. 36.
24 Nahm, op. cit.
25 Yuan became the first president of the Republic of China in 1912.
26 Weems, pp. 238-240.
Although American diplomatic influence suffered a temporary setback because of the unsuccessful Japanese sponsored rebellion, American citizens continued to be active in Korean society. In 1884, an American, Dr. Horace N. Allen founded a hospital, while some of his countrymen representing the Presbyterian and Methodist churches established themselves in Seoul.27

Foote became increasingly frustrated in his position and resigned in 1885. He made his decision because of Washington's continuing stress on noninterference in Korea's internal political matters and, the lowering of his status from Minister Plenipotentiary to Resident Minister. Foote felt that the American government had failed to recognize its responsibilities to the Korean people, and evidently he would not continue to work for such a shortsighted master. His duties were temporarily taken over by the Naval Attache at the Seoul legation, Ensign George C. Foulk who became Chargé d' Affairs until replaced by a new minister.28

27 Ibid., p. 241.

28 Tyler Dennett, Americans in Eastern Asia (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), p. 482. Although Foulk's stint as Chargé ended in February, 1886, he continued to dominate the American legation. William H. Parker became the chief American representative in February, 1886, and he was followed by Hugh H. Dinsmore in January, 1887. Ibid.
The Foulk Interlude

If Foote was pro-Korean in his personal views, Foulk was no less so. Even as Naval Attache he felt that "the prospect of good work in all directions pointed to the springtime." But the revolt of 1884 appeared to have dampened such prospects. As the Americans were considered pro-Japanese the conservatively oriented Seoul mobs expressed their disapproval (of Japanese action) by burning down Foulk's house. But the American legation was able to recapture its earlier stature shortly thereafter, when the Japanese returned to Seoul.

Foulk wanted to aid in the modernization of Korea, but he was hampered by Washington's haphazard interest in the peninsula. A case in point was Kojong's request for military advisors, made during Foote's ministry, which Washington ignored for several years. Foulk realized the increasing seriousness of the sterility of Washington's policies, and tried to rouse the State Department to action by commenting favorably on Kojong's

---

29 Harrington, p. 40.
30 Ibid.
31 Actually the advisors did not come to Korea until five years had lapsed since the Korean monarch made his request in 1883.
request for military assistance. Foulk reported that:

In speaking of this subject, His Majesty remarked upon the friendly offers of assistance made by the United States, ... and spoke at length of the great benefit Korea must derive from the assistance of competent Americans only, at this time of her weakness amidst the threatening dissensions of the European powers. ...

But the plea found only the traditional response of non-interference.

Foulk believed that "American influence and reputation for good faith are at stake" in Korea. But Washington expressed a different viewpoint, and saw the peninsula as:

[A] center of conflicting and almost hostile intrigues involving the interests of China, Japan, Russia and England, and ... it is clearly the interests of the United States to hold aloof from all this and do nothing nor be drawn into anything which would look like taking sides with any of the contestants or entering the lists of intrigues for our own benefit.

And there were even some people who wanted to close the Seoul legation and handle all Korean-American affairs through the American representative in Peking. It became increasingly obvious that Foulk's opinion on the importance of Korea to American interests was not

---

32 Williams, p. 377. The English had taken over Port Hamilton in the south, and in order to counterbalance this move, the Russians threatened to secure the ice-free port at Lazaroff. *Ibid.*

33 Harrington, p. 212.

34 Secretary Bayard to Foulk, August 19, 1885. as quoted in Harrington, p. 212.
shared by the diplomats in Washington.

Foulk also played an important part in furthering the interests of the American commercial community. For example, at the beginning of 1886, he obtained fishing rights for oysters from Kojong. It was primarily because the King liked the American representative that he agreed to give the Americans exclusive rights to the oyster trade. After successfully completing this venture he was chided mildly by the State Department. They informed Foulk that:

As a general rule it is undesirable that a legation abroad should appear to advocate concessions or exclusive privileges of trade or business in favor of its countrymen. . . . All this government asks is fair and equal treatment of its citizens.

The department views herein given are advisory merely as to future occasions of this nature. There is no purpose to condemn your reported actions which seems to have been characterized by your usual good discretion.35

Foulk, who was also interested in modernizing Korea's educational system advised Kojong in the founding of the Royal English School in September, 1886. This school was staffed by three American teachers who concentrated on the teaching of general science and the English language. Foulk's influence also helped to obtain Kojong's acceptance of the American Methodist Mission

35McCune and Harrison, p. 34.
School which was named "Pai Chai Hak Tang" or "Hall of the Rearing of Useful Men." 36

Foulk's success in promoting better American and Korean interests aroused the indignation of the Chinese who saw Foulk's ascendancy in Kojong's court as detrimental to their policies in Korea. Working through the Korean foreign minister they urged the State Department to recall Foulk. The specific charge against the American representative was that he had written a series of supposedly slanderous articles in a Shanghai newspaper which insinuated that the pro-Chinese advisors in Kojong's court were "corrupt." 37 On June 17, 1887, Secretary Bayard acquiesced to the Chinese demand. His letter to Hugh A. Dinsmore, who had become resident minister in Seoul in January, 1887, set forth the reason's for Foulk's recall:

The Chinese Charge d'Affairs . . . has made oral and written representations to me that the continued presence of Mr. Foulk in Korea was a source of peril to the relations between Korea and China . . . it was even stated that Foulk, in concert with some evil-disposed persons of Korea is planning a rebellion against China . . .

In view of all this, . . . it has been determined to relieve Ensign Foulk as Naval Attache, . . . 38

36 Weems, p. 244.
37 Palmer, p. 57.
38 Ibid., p. 78.
Dinsmore immediately protested on the grounds that not only was Foulk the only interpreter attached to the legation, but he was also a strong influence on the Korean monarch. Kojong also showed his displeasure over Foulk's dismissal by discharging his foreign minister who had acted as the agent of the Chinese. But the protests were of no avail. Washington would not reverse its stand, nor would Bayard even listen to Foulk's defense. It was clearly a Chinese victory, and once again revealed that the United States did not want to become involved in matters relating to Korean sovereignty.

"We Cannot Interfere in Internal Political Matters"

In the several years following the recall of Foulk the Koreans turned increasingly to the Russians for aid and advice. The Chinese cause which had won a victory in the departure of Foulk, was checked by Peking's fears of possible Japanese aggression in Korea. American influence remained substantial, though more as a consequence of the activities of private citizens than of American diplomats.

Perhaps the best known American citizen in Korea

\[39\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 81-82.}\]
at this time was Dr. Horace Allen who had founded a hospital in Seoul. In 1887 he convinced the Korean monarch of the advisability of establishing legations in Europe and the United States in order to emphasize Seoul's independence from Peking. The King agreed because he believed that, "everything depends on . . . interesting America in this country," and he asked Allen "to guide the diplomats who went to the United States." Again the Chinese intervened; this time to prevent the departure of the Korean minister who was chosen to represent his country in Washington. Only when Kojong asked Peking's permission was the diplomat permitted to leave for his new post. Arriving in Washington, the Korean representative, at Allen's instigation, presented himself first to the State Department rather than to the Chinese embassy. By this action, Kojong's promise to acknowledge continued Chinese suzerainty over Korea was broken, but his small nation had now established a diplomatic post in the United States, which was the first of a series of Korean legations in various parts of the world.

A facet of the American position in Korea at this time that aroused a considerable concern in the State

40 Harrington, p. 226.
41 Ibid., p. 83.
42 Ibid., p. 231.
Department was missionary work. American diplomats were convinced that American missionaries were overzealous in their attempts to convert the Koreans. Certainly, reported an American representative in Seoul, they were to be commended for their work in schools, hospitals, and orphanages, but he "considered ... any evangelizing work here at least premature and endangering their position and popularity with the natives."\(^43\) Korean opposition to the increased religious activities prompted a further exchange of notes between the State Department and its Seoul legation in which it was agreed that the missionaries should stay within their treaty rights and restrict themselves to secular matters.\(^44\) The diplomats believed that "it would certainly be unfortunate ... if ... they [missionaries] should render their well-met efforts a ground of hostility on the part of the natives."\(^45\) At least one American churchman expressed displeasure over the State Department's actions which he considered as an absolute ban

\(^{43}\) Palmer, p. 205

\(^{44}\) Ibid., pp. 208-211. Although both the Korean laws and the Shufeldt Treaty restricted the American missionaries to non-religious teaching the letter of the law was not upheld until the period in question. Ibid.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.
on the teaching of religion. He longed "for the time when our treaty shall be revised and freedom of religion allowed." But Washington stood fast and reiterated its position:

You are aware that the Corean people in general look with little favor on the propagation of foreign religious views in that country and that the Government there, in concluding the treaty of 1882, refrained from conferring any special privileges in this regard.

American missionaries later obtained greater freedoms through the operation of the most favored nation clause in the Shufeldt treaty.

Although the Shufeldt treaty committed the United States to a policy of "perpetual peace and friendship" between Americans and Koreans, at times Washington's behavior seemed to belie this commitment. This appears most clearly in State Department responses to Kojong's friendly request for advisory aid in reforming the Korean army and its governmental administration. It took Washington five years to dispatch three military advisors who were to train a nucleus of a modern army

---

46 Ibid., p. 223.
47 Ibid.
48 This occurred in 1893 when the French acquired religious freedoms for their missionaries. Through the most-favored nation clause of the Shufelt Treaty the Americans were able to gain the same freedoms. Ibid.
for Korea. 49 When Dr. Allen, who had become a member of the American legation's staff helped the King to secure Americans for administrative and teaching jobs, he was informed by the State Department that he, "should not have used his good offices to secure teachers or other employees for the Korean government. This was not part of job." 50

Washington's seeming indifference to the growth of American influence in Korea came at a time when the Korean monarch was increasingly desirous of American assistance and advice in face of the growing Sino-Japanese rivalry in his country. 51 Not only did he readily comply with the requests of the American legation to renew the contracts of two American teachers at the Royal School, but he named Dr. Allen to head the Royal Hospital, and appointed two Americans as his personal advisors. 52 In 1892, Kojong dispatched Dr. Allen, and the American teacher from the Royal School, Homer Hulbert, and a Korean diplomat to Washington in order to obtain financial and advisory assistance, but the State Department rejected their overtures. 53

49Ibid., p. 144.
50Harrington, p. 245.
51Dennett, pp. 706-707.
52Palmer, pp. 131-132.
53Chung, p. 168.
During the 1890's both the internal and the external affairs of Korea were deeply affected by the struggle between China and Japan for the ascendancy in the Hermit Kingdom, a contest which culminated in the Sino-Japanese war of 1894-1895. At this time the Chinese, through their resident minister in Korea, Yuan Shik-kai, was successfully reasserting its influence on the Korean government. Tokyo realized that its own plans in Korea were threatened by Yuan's success. Although the United States continued to take a neutral stand, it was inclined to view the Korean aspirations of a swiftly-modernizing Japan with greater favor.

The immediate origins of the Sino-Japanese war are to be found in the internal strife that characterized Korean politics. In March 1894, a reactionary anti-foreign group in south Korea rose against the Seoul government in what is known as the Tonghak rebellion. An initial rebel victory prompted the King to ask Peking for military aid. The Chinese responded by dispatching fifteen hundred soldiers to Korea, thereby failing to comply with article three of the Treaty of Tientsin of 1884, which forbade either China or Japan sending troops into Korea without obtaining the other's permission. After receiving the delayed
notification of Chinese troop movements, Japan ordered four hundred marines to Korea where they were placed at the disposal of their ambassador in Seoul.\(^{54}\) This situation further deteriorated when neither the Chinese nor the Japanese removed their troops from the peninsula after the capitulation of the rebels.

American reaction to these developments was inclined towards the Japanese position. Commenting on Korean attempts to induce both powers to withdraw their forces, John M. B. Sill, the American resident minister, believed "that the fault in the present difficulties is due to the action of the Chinese in forcing their troops upon Korea."\(^{55}\) According to Sill, the Japanese would not leave because they feared the possibility of losing face. Furthermore the situation offered them a good "opportunity to [re]assert their fast-fading influence in Korea."\(^{56}\)

The Koreans were not concerned with which party was at fault, but rather with the immediate removal of both Japanese and Chinese forces. They made overtures to the French, British, American, and Russian legations to intervene and force the offending troops from the

\(^{54}\) Weems, p. 250.

\(^{55}\) Palmer, p. 332.

\(^{56}\) Ibid.
peninsula. Although the Occidentals refused to commit their military forces some did send messages to the Chinese and Japanese which asked for the withdrawal of the unwanted forces. When the Koreans renewed their plea for American military assistance, Washington again refused, although it did send a note to Tokyo condemning war. Neither of the intervening powers was inclined to accept the modest mediations of the West and the ensuing war lasted until April 17, 1895, when China acquiesced to the terms of the Treaty of Shimonoseki which "recognized definitely the full and complete independence and autonomy of Korea." Japan quickly took advantage of its victory; and within several months the American minister noted that the Japanese were running Korea.

Although the war effectively disposed of one of Japan's rivals in Korea, another and more powerful competitor, Russia, was ready to thwart Japan's long-term plans for exploiting the fruits of victory. Russian penetration of Manchuria and northern China had increased in the years immediately preceding the war.

57 Ibid., p. 335.
58 Ibid., p. 337.
59 Borton, p. 207.
60 Ibid.
and the Russian bear became a willing ally in King Kojong's attempts to thwart a Japanese takeover in Korea. Japan's position was further compromised by the palace coup of October 8, 1895, in which certain Korean nobles sought to enhance their own influence by assassinating the anti-Japanese Queen Min. Tokyo's minister to Korea was also implicated in the plot. Kojong took refuge in the Russian legation and issued a series of statements condemning the Japanese.

The American role in these developments was again characterized by the differing positions taken by her representative in Korea and the State Department. Sill sought to convince the Korean people that the Japanese should not be held responsible for the actions of one of their bureaucrats. On the other hand the State Department disagreed and, condemned Sill's action in two successive notes. He was told that "intervention in the political concerns of Korea is not among your functions, and is forbidden by diplomatic instruction." Washington also issued a condemnatory note to one of its minor officials at the legation who was interested in Korean matters:

[I]ooking towards strengthening the authority of the king or otherwise taking part in matters which do not immediately concern the interests of the United States, might be open to serious objection on account of our consistent policy,

61 Palmer, p. 267.
which we carry out in Asia as well as Europe and elsewhere, of abstaining from cooperation with other powers in any intervention of whatever nature. We appreciate the difficulty of your position but we must be consistent with our traditional policy.  

With the King's removal from center stage by his isolation in the Russian embassy and the United States committed to a policy of non-interference, Japan felt the time was ripe to consolidate its position in Korea by increasing its control over the Seoul cabinet. But Tokyo underestimated the strength of Korean nationalists who, embittered by the murder of their Queen and aroused by the anti-Japanese remarks of their King, vented their anger toward the Japanese with several days of violent street demonstrations. These disturbances were directed by private American citizens, the most influential being Dr. Horace G. Underwood. The American missionaries in Korea, unlike their brethren elsewhere, were ardent supporters of nationalism in their adopted countries.  

Shocked over the loss of his wife and grateful to his Russian protectors, King Kojong stayed in the Russian embassy for two years during which time his

---

62 Ibid., p. 273.

63 Dr. Underwood was an important member of the American religious community in Korea and, was responsible for saving many lives during the cholera epidemic in the summer of 1895. Harrington, p. 101.
hosts gained increasing influence in Korean affairs. The emergence of Russia as the dominant foreign influence in Korea did not, at first, have an adverse effect on the American position in Seoul. For example, American Homer Hulbert became head of the Royal English School and an American company was unhampered in its construction of the Seoul-Chemulpo Railway. But when Alexis Speyer came to Korea in 1897 as the Russian representative a new policy was initiated when he announced bluntly that "no Korean entertaining friendly sensations [sic] for America shall have a place in the [Korean] Government."65

Washington Acknowledges the Japanese Ascendancy

The Russian ascendancy in Korea was short-lived, partly because Russia was more interested in China than in Korea and therefore did not want to antagonize unduly the Japanese and the British, and partly because Korean nationalism began to reassert itself under such native leaders as the American-educated Dr. Philip Jaishon.66 By April, 1898, Russia indicated her willingness to acknowledge Japanese ambitions in Korea

64Weems, p. 311.

65Harrington, p. 298. Speyer did allow an American lawyer of pro-Russian views, Clarence R. Greathouse, to continue on as an advisor to the Seoul government. Ibid.

66Borton, p. 219.
by signing the Rosin-Nishi agreement in which the Czar recognized Japan's dominant position in Korea.

During this period Washington became increasingly convinced that its interests would best be served if the American legation was closed and Japanese suzerainty in Korea accepted. Again the American field representative, now Dr. Horace Allen, disagreed. Contrary to his stand he was to be America's last significant official representative to the Korean government until the end of the Second World War.

Allen's course as minister resident clearly indicated that he felt American influence in Korea should be enlarged rather than diminished. His success in this area was indicated by the remarks of an American traveller, who reported "that in this country they [travellers] find the only Asiatic community of foreigners where American influence predominates." 67 In 1900 Kojong once again turned to Allen for advice, this time concerning action to be taken against a revolt in the northwest. The Doctor suggested that the monarch immediately suppress the disturbances. 68 Although Allen's activities gained wide respect among Koreans, his own assessment of the American position

67 Harrington, p. 196.
68 Ibid., p. 115.
in Korea, as of 1902, was less than optimistic:

The Koreans have the idea that we don't count anymore. We live in this little disreputable Korean bungalow, and put on no style; make no threats, and they think they can neglect us. 69

Seeking to change this image, in 1904, he tried to persuade Washington that American troops should be used to safeguard Korea's independence from Japanese intrusion. He was rebuffed with a reply that the use of force was "wholly unjustifiable and dangerous as establishing a precedent which may be used to destroy what little semblance there still remains of Korean independence." 70

The following year Washington closed its long debate with its field representatives in Seoul by closing the American legation. President Theodore Roosevelt looked upon Japanese domination of Korea as desirable both from the standpoint of Korean progress and the protection of American interests. He also believed that the United States had "the same interests with Japan and Great Britain in preserving the peace of the Orient." 71 This viewpoint was implemented near the close of the Russo-Japanese war on July 29, 1905,

69 Ibid., p. 309.
70 Ibid., p. 191
when Secretary of War William H. Taft, and Japanese Premier Tarō Katsura, met behind closed doors to exchange Japanese recognition of the American position in the Philippines for American approval of Japanese suzerainty over Korea. The American--Japanese accord on Korea as expressed in the Taft-Katsura Memorandum explained that:

"In regard to the Korean question Count Katsura observed that . . . if left to herself . . . Korea will draw back to her habit of improvidently entering into any agreements or treaties with other powers, thus resuscitating the same international-complications as existed before the war. . . . Taft] fully admitted the justness of the Count's observations and remarked to the effect that, . . . the establishment by Japanese troops of a suzerainty over Korea . . . was the logical result of the present war and would directly contribute to permanent peace in the East."72

When the Treaty of Portsmouth, which was significantly influenced by the moderating talents of Theodore Roosevelt, removed the last significant barrier to Japan's ascendancy in Korea, the United States closed its legation in Seoul in November, 1905, replacing it by a consul who was to receive his orders from the American representative in Tokyo. Little notice, if any, had been paid to a secret appeal from the Korean King in which he had asked for American diplomatic and

72 Tewksbury, p. 22.
military assistance;\textsuperscript{73} Roosevelt had closed the door on the Korean people. He believed American interests would be safe under the watchful eye of the Japanese, and he would not aid people who "could not strike one blow in their own defense."\textsuperscript{74}

American policy towards Korea was further defined by the Root-Takahira agreement of November 30, 1908. In this accord, Secretary of State Elihu Root and the Japanese ambassador in Washington, Kogoro Takahira, agreed to acknowledge the "Open Door" in China, but nothing was mentioned about Korea. Tokyo interpreted the American silence as an acknowledgement of the Japanese supremacy in Korea.\textsuperscript{75} Two years later, the Japanese Empire officially annexed Korea.

From 1883 to 1905 the American field representatives constantly disagreed with their superiors in Washington, and tried to help Korea, but they were continuously hampered by the State Department. During this period, the United States was trusted by the Korean people, yet she failed to aid the country's modernization in

\textsuperscript{73}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{74}\textit{Horton}, p. 242.
\textsuperscript{75}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 248. Subordinating the consul at Seoul to the American representative in Tokyo would also indicate Washington's recognition of Japan's position in Korea.
any substantial way. Time and time again the Koreans would turn to Washington for assistance, but they always received the same reply; "We can not interfere in internal matters."

The Challenge to Japanese Supremacy

On August 29, 1910, under the pretext of protecting Korea's independence, Japan annexed the peninsula, relinquishing its power only after its defeat at the end of the Second World War. During this period the United States, which had secured commercial and religious privileges through the Taft-Katsura agreement of 1905, ceased to accept Korea as an independent nation. Any transactions between American and Korean interests were handled in accordance with the Japanese Proclamation of Annexation.

The Government of Japan and Korea, being convinced of the urgent necessity of introducing reforms responsive to the requirements of the situation and of furnishing sufficient guarantee for the future, have, with the approval of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and His Majesty the Emperor of Korea, concluded, . . . a treaty providing for complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.??

At first the apathetic Koreans accepted their fate, but at the end of the First World War they became hopeful

76For the pertinent excerpt from the Taft-Katsura agreement, see above, p. 29.
77Tewksbury, p. 37.
when it was revealed to them that American president Woodrow Wilson believed in the principle of self-determination of nationalities. While diplomats designed the new world at the Paris Peace Conference, the first concrete signs of Korean opposition to Japanese suzerainty were developing. Using King Kojong’s funeral services in Seoul as a rallying point, thirty-three prominent Koreans signed the Declaration of Independence on March 1, 1919. They appealed to President Wilson for aid, but even though one of the group, Dr. Syngman Rhee, had developed a friendship with the American leader, the President did not acknowledge their plea; evidently Wilson believed in self-determination for Europe but not for Asia.

Although this political unrest, which continued for about a year, went unnoticed outside of Korea, the Japanese swiftly suppressed it, forcing the nationalists underground. Many Koreans fled their homeland, most of

---

78 Robert T. Oliver, Syngman Rhee, The Man Behind The Myth (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1954), pp. 109-114. Rhee had obtained his Ph.D. from Princeton while Wilson was President of the University.


the exiles settling either in China, Hawaii, or the United States. These people, individually and through their organizations, continuously appealed to the United States for economic and military support in re-establishing their political freedom. 81

These pleas were of little avail as Japan continued to strengthen her political and economic hold on Korea during the twenties and thirties. Although the peninsula was developed as an integral part of the Japanese economy, Koreans remained in the status of second-class citizens.

Throughout this period the United States paid little, if any, attention to Korea and ignored the Korean Government-in-exile. Very few Americans knew, or cared, about the peninsula, and Washington did not want to antagonize the Tokyo government by interfering in the internal affairs of the Japanese Empire, as long as American commercial interests were secure. Even when the Japanese started to expel American missionaries from Korea in 1941, the State Department acquiesced to Tokyo's wishes. Then, during the War, the United States made no distinction between Koreans and Japanese, either in Hawaii or on the American continent, as local

81 Tewksbury, p. 53.
military commanders treated the former as prisoners of war. The United States refused to acknowledge that Koreans were not Japanese, and that they possessed their own culture, tradition, and language.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, Dr. Rhee, who headed the Korean exiles in the United States, accelerated his drive to obtain recognition of his homeland from the State Department. He was aided by a group of Americans and Koreans who were politically and financially interested in Korean independence. The State Department was constantly pressured by these lobbyists, but its response was negligible as it felt that this group did not represent the Korean people. It is questionable whether Washington would have acknowledged a representative group.

In December, 1941, Rhee, through his secretary, Chang Kee Young, wrote to Senator Guy Gillette asking for the Senator's assistance in approaching the State Department. But Washington officials told the legislator that they feared any move to recognize Korea

82 Oliver, Syngman Rhee, p. 189.

83 Yong-sin Im, My Forty-Year Fight for Korea (New York: A. A. Wyn, 1951), p. 257. Some members of this group were: John G. Staggers; Jay Jerome Williams; Dr. Robert T. Oliver; Colonel M. Preston Goodfellow; Mrs. Lorraine Engels; Dr. Maurice Williams; Colonel Ben Limb; Dr. Sae Sun Kim; Dr. Henry De Young; and Dr. Herbert Kim.
would complicate the delicate problem of the exchange of diplomats between Japan and the United States taking place in the weeks immediately after the declaration of war. Senator Gillette explained the American attitude to Rhee in his letter of December 18:

I have discussed the recognition of Korea as an independent political entity with the State Department. I found them sympathetic but of course no action can be taken until the exchange of diplomatic representatives and attachés between the Japanese Empire and the United States Government has been effected.  

In January the resourceful Rhee tried a new approach. He offered Alger Hiss and Dr. Stanley Hornbeck of the Department of State's Far Eastern Section the use of Korean exiles for military purposes in exchange for recognition of his government-in-exile, as the legitimate representative of the Korean people. Although this offer was refused, Rhee placed some young Korean men at the disposal of Korean lobbyist, Colonel M. Preston Goodfellow of the Office of Strategic Services for training in sabotage work. Rhee's plan was to drop these men into Korea when the Allies launched their proposed pincer movement on Japan. But when the strategists adopted an island-hopping approach this plan was never implemented.

84 Oliver, *Syngman Rhee*, p. 176.
During this period the American government persisted in its refusal to recognize a Korean Government-in-exile. Assistant Secretary of State, Adolf A. Berle, Jr., informed Rhee and his compatriots that they did not represent the Korean people as most of them had been away from their homeland for nearly twenty-five years. The infuriated Rhee replied:

The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea is the sole representative of the Korean people, and regards itself, on the basis of the treaty of 1882, not as a free movement in any sense whatever of that phrase, but as the only government agency of Korea that is in existence.  

But as the Allies stepped up their war effort in the Pacific increased attention was focused on stimulating discord among the subjugated peoples (i.e., Koreans, Thais, Burmese, Formosans, and others) within the Japanese Empire. In early 1942, President Roosevelt, in a radio broadcast, made a passing remark concerning "Japanese despotism in Korea;" and shortly

87 Oliver, Syngman Rhee, p. 179. For pertinent excerpt from the Shufeldt treaty of 1882, see above, p. 5.


89 U.S., Department of State, A Historical Summary of United States--Korean Relations, p. 57.
after, the Acting Secretary of State, Summer Welles, told a press conference that the American government was sympathetic to the Korean cause. Throughout the year, Washington officials, especially the Pacific War Council, discussed the possibilities of Korean independence, and in March, 1943, the topic was reviewed by the State Department and the visiting British Foreign Minister, Anthony Eden.

The Fruits of Victory

As American policy-makers paid increasing attention to the war against Japan it was decided at the Cairo Conference of December, 1943, that the Korean people should be given some idea of their political status in the post-war world. To stimulate resistance to the Japanese Army in occupied Asia, the United States, Great Britain, and China declared that "the aforesaid three great powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea, shall become free and independent." The

90bid., p. 9.


Allies did not announce what was to happen during the interim period and they did not concern themselves with this problem until later. This revived interest in Korea by the American government was prompted primarily by General Douglas MacArthur's westward advance, but unlike the plans for Japan, nobody had bothered to study or prepare for the future American occupation of Korea. The Allies reiterated their pledges to Korea at the Potsdam Conference in July, 1945, acknowledging that "the terms of the Cairo Declaration shall be carried out and Japanese sovereignty shall be limited to the islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu, Shikoku, and such minor islands as we determine."\(^{93}\)

Finally when the Soviet Union entered the war against Japan it renewed its previous pledges to its allies concerning Korea: "Loyal to its Allied duty, the Soviet Government has accepted the proposal of the Allies and has joined in the declaration of the Allied Powers of July 26 [the Potsdam Agreement]."\(^{94}\)

The Allies first anxiously concerned themselves with the details of governing post-war Korea at the

---

\(^{93}\) Canada, Department of External Affairs, Documents on the Korean Crisis (Ottawa: King's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1950), p. 18.

\(^{94}\) U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 44.
Yalta Conference of January-February, 1945. President Roosevelt reiterated that the Peninsula should be developed under a joint American-Russian trusteeship. At first Stalin agreed to this plan, but during the latter part of the talks he proposed that Great Britain be included as one of the ruling partners. While the British did take part in discussions concerning the future of Korea they did not join the Americans and the Russians in ruling the country.

Toward the end of the War, the American position, as expressed by Roosevelt, was that the military forces of the Soviet Union and the United States would accept the surrender of the Japanese Army in Korea. Following the military roundup, both governments would jointly develop a plan for trusteeship. While Stalin believed that the Koreans, who were adamantly opposed to trusteeship, should be given some semblance of internal political responsibility, the Americans strongly disagreed. Washington refused to acknowledge any of the so-called Korean governments, and on June 8, 1945, this

---


policy was clearly defined by Acting Secretary of State Joseph C. Grew. He declared that "the 'Korean Provisional Government' and other Korean organizations do not possess, at the present time, the qualifications requisite for obtaining recognition by the United States as a governing authority for any part of Korea." 97

The Korean reaction to the Allied plans for trusteeship was best expressed by the pro-Korean American educator, Dr. Robert Oliver who remarked that the Koreans "found to their credulous amazement that the defeat of Japan meant they were losing one master in order to acquire two." 98 The unquenchable nationalism of the Koreans offered fertile ground for the future rift in East-West relations.

97Chung, p. 163.
CHAPTER II

ALLIES CONFER

Division at the 38th Parallel

The American return to Korea, forty-five years after acquiescing to Japanese suzerainty, did not take place under particularly favorable circumstances. The Japanese peace offer of August 10, 1945, found the American troops closest to Korea some 600 miles away in Okinawa, while a Soviet army was poised on the Russian--Korean border and additional Russian troops were moving southeast through Manchuria. With the Russians in a favorable military position relative to the occupation of Korea, and with no detailed agreements between the two great powers on the implementation of the Cairo Declaration,¹ the American position in Korea seemed far from secure.

Although the Soviet forces could have easily overrun the Korean peninsula, the Moscow government,

¹In testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, General T. S. Timberman explained that, at Potsdam, the Russians had proposed that the Americans assist them in a joint "amphibious landing in Korea," but the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General George C. Marshall refused, explaining that all American troops were needed for the expected assault on Japan's home islands. U.S., Congress,
on August 16, 1945, accepted an American proposal for the division of the peninsula at the 38th parallel north latitude, with the Russians being responsible for the surrender of Japanese forces north of the dividing line, and the Americans for those south of the line. Originally meant as a temporary division, the line not only permanently cut Korea in two but was also a large factor in increasing East-West tensions. Although the Russians had knowingly moved south of the 38th on August 26, in the Kaesong district, they evacuated on September 3—the same day as American troops disembarked at the port city of Pusan on the southeastern tip of the peninsula. This adherence to the prior agreement on Korea may have been motivated by Stalin's desire to improve his bargaining position on matters relating to the occupation of Japan. The official announcement of the Allied occupation of Korea came on September 2, when General Douglas MacArthur issued his "General Order Number One," which acknowledged

House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, 81st Cong., 2nd Sess., July 11, 1950, Report 2495, p. 3.

2Ibid., p. 2.

the Japanese surrender and announced the beginning of
the military occupation.

The decision to divide Korea along the 38th was
a joint project of the Secretary of War, the State
Department, the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff and the State-
War-Navy Coordinating Committee (S.W.N.C.C.). It was
proposed on August 11, one day before Soviet forces
entered north Korea, but was not accepted by President
Truman until the fifteenth and on the same day Wash-
ington notified Stalin of its decision.\(^4\) The wisdom
of dividing the country in this fashion was questioned
by a junior member of the S.W.N.C.C. who informed his
superiors that they were arbitrarily splitting a social
and economic entity,\(^5\) but his objections, to which
subsequent events provided some validation, were
ignored. At a 1950 hearing of the House Committee on
Foreign Affairs, a State Department official was asked:
"Was this line that was drawn across Korea only for
purposes of surrender, or was it also a line that was
chosen to determine where the Russians would fight and
we would fight?"\(^6\) His reply was that:

\(^4\)U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign
Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 2.

\(^5\)John Gunther, The Riddle of MacArthur (New

\(^6\)U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign
Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 5.
The division between United States and Soviet forces along the 38th parallel was a line of demarcation adopted solely for the purpose of receiving the surrender of the Japanese forces. It was never intended by the United States to be the artificial barrier it has now become. Whether division at the 38th parallel was meant to be a temporary condition, or not, it laid the foundations for a future war and the political division of the Korean peninsula that has continued to the present time.

The division of Korea had a great effect on the political, cultural, and socio-economic patterns of the nation. In the last months of the war, the Japanese Governor General of Korea, Nobuyuki Abe asked the leftist nationalist Lyuh Woon Ayung to take over the civil administration of the country because his party, The People's Republic of Korea, seemed to have strong popular support. Hyung's influence increased throughout the country, especially after MacArthur issued "Order Number One", and on September 6, he named Rhee as President, an honor that Rhee declined, and designated himself as Vice-President. But when Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, Commander of American forces in Korea,

---

7Ibid.

8As the tide began to turn against the Japanese they helped to stimulate nationalism in occupied Asia in order to establish a power bloc against the Occidentals.

9Yong-sin Im, p. 243. Rhee refused this offer because he objected to the leftist influence in the People's Republic of Korea. Ibid.

10General Joseph Stilwell was suppose to have headed the Korean Military Government, but because of opposition
arrived in Seoul he refused to acknowledge Hyung, or his party.\textsuperscript{11} To recognize a civilian government would not only have been contrary to the secret Allied agreement on trusteeship but also to MacArthur's directive to the Korean people in which he stated: "By virtue of the authority vested in me as Commander-in-Chief, United States Army Forces, Pacific, I hereby establish military control over Korea south of 38 degrees north latitude and the inhabitants thereof . . . .\textsuperscript{12} A somewhat similar pattern developed in the north, where the Japanese Governor of Pyongan Namdo Province, which includes the capital city of North Korea, Pyongyang, named Christian nationalist Man-sik Cho as head of the province's government in early September. At first the Russians accepted Cho and allowed him to guide the civilian affairs of their zone. But his continuing opposition to the Allied policy of trusteeship proved his undoing and he was deposed and interned by the Soviets.\textsuperscript{13}

---

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{12}U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 45.

Not only did the division of Korea affect the embryo political life of the nation but it also disrupted the economic balance of the country. The south is basically agricultural and lacks any substantial mineral deposits, while the north possesses an abundance of minerals and hydroelectric power, but little good farm lands. Prior to division the north had supplied the south with electric power, coal, and fertilizer and in return received foodstuffs. With the erection of the invisible barrier, at the 38th parallel, this complementary exchange came to an abrupt end. Although the north Koreans, with their greater industrial power suffered less than did those south of the 38th, all Koreans were outraged. The policy set forth in "Order Number One" was not only creating economic hardship, but it also denied them their long-anticipated independence. General Hodge had only been in Korea two days when he informed MacArthur, on September 10, that "dissatisfaction with the division of the country grows;"14 the welcome mat was already wearing thin.

The Moscow Conference

From December 16-26, 1945, the foreign ministers of the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet

14Appleman, p. 3.
Union met in Moscow to discuss post-war problems, one of which was the trusteeship plan for Korea. Although Washington officials, at the end of the war, had taken the stand that Korea should be placed under a five-year trusteeship, they changed their minds when Russian influence increased throughout the nation. In order to safeguard the American position, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes introduced a ten-year plan for trusteeship but this was vetoed by Molotov. Finally the Allies agreed on a five-year plan with the stipulation that an all Korean provisional government be established. In order to implement this plan, the ministers agreed that a Joint Commission, composed of the American and Soviet commanders in Korea and their representatives, be initiated to aid in the establishment of a provisional government. The Commission's job would be to "consult

---

15 The length of time proposed by President Roosevelt for a Korean trusteeship is definitely unclear. General Stilwell reports that at first Roosevelt suggested a twenty-five year trusteeship but later reduced it to five years. Theodore R. White, (ed.) The Stilwell Papers ("Macfadden Books"; New York: Macfadden Bartell Corp., 1962), p. 203. But an official pamphlet reports that after the Tehran Conference, the President told the Pacific War Council that Stalin had agreed to a forty year tutelage for Korea. U.S., Department of State, A Historical Summary of the United States--Korean Relations, p. 58.

with the Korean democratic parties and social organizations," after which they would pass on their recommendations concerning the formation of a provisional government to the Governments of the United States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom and China. Once established the provisional government, would consult with Korean political groups and the Joint Commission in order to implement "a four-power trusteeship of Korea for a period of up to five years." Although the diplomats at Moscow had seemingly reached agreement, on what to do in Korea, the plan was never fulfilled.

Not all Americans were in agreement with the decisions being made at Moscow. On the third day of the Conference, Secretary of Navy James V. Forrestal suggested to other American officials that Washington adopt a different plan concerning the future of Korea:

It might be more realistic to bypass trusteeship and seek guarantees directly... In absence of Russian cooperation a possible solution would be to have U.S. trusteeship for South Korea and trusteeship for North Korea under U.N.O. to end mutually with withdrawal of troops and invitation to U.N.O. membership after five years, with free movement of persons and goods between zones in meantime. This should be last choice, however. (sic)

17U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, pp. 47-48. For pertinent excerpts from the Korean section of Moscow declaration see Appendix A, p. 158.

18Willis, p. 125.
While the Allied diplomats were satisfied with the results obtained at Moscow the Korean people were not. Yet, most Koreans apathetically accepted trusteeship because they were in no position to challenge the Allied decision. The only Koreans who openly welcomed trusteeship were the Communists, although they had previously opposed the idea. Now they saw it as the only "guarantee that Korea will not fall into the hands of the Western Imperialists." Understandably General Hodge saw the matter in a different light as noted in his response to a query by nationalist Yong-sin Im on the meaning of trusteeship: "[T]rusteeship means simply that Korea will receive the material and spiritual aid of the Allied Powers."  

Joint Conferences

In mid-January, three weeks after the conclusion of the Moscow talks, the commanders of the American and Russian zones in Korea met in the first of numerous but fruitless pre-Commission discussions that were to last, with several interruptions for three weeks. From the start both sides had distinctly opposing views and as the talks continued their differences became more

19 Im, p. 247.
20 Ibid., p. 246.
acute. The Russian position, as expressed by General T. F. Shtikov, was that unification should wait upon the establishment of a provisional government, while the American viewpoint as put forward by General Hodge was that unification should precede any native government. It is interesting to note that the Moscow agreement does call for the establishment of a provisional government before unification but only after the successful completion of the Joint Commission talks. So the opposing stands were obviously interpretations of an ambiguous agreement. It seems that the Russians wanted to extend the talks in order to provide more time for the development of pro-Russian sentiment among the Koreans. When the talks began most Koreans still were inclined to accept the myth of American friendship, thus immediate unification might weaken Russian influence in the north. Whereas a continued division of the country, while Russia sought to enhance its influence in the provisional government, might better serve the long-run interests of the Soviets in Korea. The results of these first meetings between Hodge and Shtikov, which lasted until February 5, were virtually negligible. About the only positive achievement was

that the commanders had been able to size up each other, and could now plan their maneuvers for the future Commission discussions with greater precision.

Although the Russians were adamantly opposed to immediate unification at the Conference table, they were not disposed to parade this fact before the Korean people. When General Hodge announced that "the Commission's task is the early unification of Korea both economically and politically," Shtikov was quick to agree. As in the past, words were spoken and promises made, but still the barrier at the 38th remained.

The first meeting of the Joint Commission convened in Seoul six and a half weeks after the cessation of the Hodge-Shtikov preparatory talks. The Russian delegate adopted a nonsensical and an obvious political move when he advocated that no group which had disavowed the Moscow agreement be allowed to confer with the Joint Commission. Under such a dispensation all of the numerous Korean political groups, except the Communists would have been disqualified. Obviously the Soviets were playing for more time and did not expect the United States to acquiesce in their proposal.

They were therefore not disappointed when Major General Albert E. Brown, the American delegate, rejected the Soviet proposal, and the talks were suspended, not to be resumed for more than a year.\textsuperscript{23} While the joint talks were in suspension, views on how to go about establishing a provisional government were exchanged through correspondence. American officials proposed that the south Koreans should have a two-thirds representation in the provisional government as opposed to one third for the north as about twenty-one of the thirty-two million Koreans lived south of the 38th parallel. Although the Moscow Agreement made no mention of selecting the provisional government through proportional representation the Russians agreed to the American proposal on the condition that the northern representatives be given veto powers in order to protect the minority in the industrial north from the majority in the agrarian south.\textsuperscript{24}

As this exchange of notes between the two military governments continued there were signs that the United States was beginning seriously to contemplate organizing

\textsuperscript{23}U.S., Department of State, Korea: 1945 to 1948, p. 4.

south Korea as a separate nation. Late in July, convinced that the Russians were stalling for time in their studied scouting of the eligibility for consultation of the numerous Korean political groups, the Americans proposed that each of the occupying powers consult with the political organizations in their own zone. The Russians agreed, and now both sides appeared ready to accept a policy of immediate division with unification put off for some indefinite future. About a month after he proposed the proportional representation plan, General Brown suggested that, in order to accelerate the Allied plans for Korean independence, the time-consuming oral consultations with the various Korean political parties should cease and be replaced by written questionnaires sent through the mail. Again the Russians agreed, but only temporarily—they answered Brown's proposal of proportional representation by suggesting that a provisional assembly be convened with the north and south having equal representation. 25

Since the proposals and counterproposals suggested in the exchange of notes between the two military governments were never implemented the Department of State believed that the Joint Commission talks should be reconvened in order to make further attempts to

25 Ibid.
establish a Korean provisional government. On April 8, 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed that the Joint Commission discussions be reopened.26 The Russian foreign minister Molotov agreed, but specified that the talks be conducted "on the basis of the exact execution of the Moscow Agreement on Korea, ... ."27

The second and final series of talks commenced in Seoul, on May 21, and dealt primarily with the problem of which of the numerous Korean political groups were to be considered as "democratic organizations" as specified in the Moscow Agreement. Although there seemed to be an attitude of compromise among the opposing forces they swiftly came to an impasse. The Russians who had envisaged consultation with some one hundred and eighteen political groups, were appalled when four hundred and twenty-two groups presented their credentials to the Commission. The Russians, convinced of the anti-Soviet character of these developments, tried to restrict recognition to those groups having at least ten thousand members.28 The American representative would not agree to such a restriction.

26McCune, Korea Today, p. 281.
27Ibid., p. 287.
because he believed that all parties which had not actively opposed trusteeship were acceptable.\textsuperscript{29} The American line was unmistakable: reduce Communist influence in the proposed provisional government through a policy of numbers.

The American position in the joint talks was made difficult not only by the increasing tensions between East and West, but also by the character of the dominant political organizations in south Korea. Virtually all of them, but particularly the large party headed by the ultra-nationalist Syngman Rhee, carried on a continuous campaign against the Moscow Agreement. Despite the "hard line" pursued by the Americans in the joint talks with the Russians the rightist groups were dissatisfied. The American Commander in Korea "was seriously worried that Rhee would use extreme rightist groups to sabotage the work of the Commission."\textsuperscript{30} Although there was little indication on the part of American policy makers to place any trust in these rightist groups, Washington found it increasingly necessary to accept them as a counterbalance to growing

\textsuperscript{29}Ibid.

Communist influence in Korea. Thus on July 14, 1947, General Brown dismissed Russian requests to hold back recognition of the numerous rightist organizations, pointing out "that exclusion from consultation can only be by mutual agreements of both Delegations as specifically stated in the Marshall-Molotov letters." 31

Faced with a continually growing Communist influence in Korea and the failure of bilateral talks to produce any significant agreement, the United States, in August, made overtures to Moscow concerning a new approach to the Korean problem. The proposal called for "the four powers adhering to the Moscow Agreement to meet to consider how that agreement may be speedily carried out." 32 In addition to calling for four-power talks, Washington suggested seven steps to Korean independence: 1) elections should be held in each zone to elect provisional legislatures; 2) those elected should "choose representatives in numbers which reflect the proportion between the populations of the two zones" for a "national provisional legislature;" 3) the provisional government should meet with representatives

31U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 51.
32U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 43.
of the United States, Russia, Great Britain, and China in order to implement the plans laid down in the Moscow Agreement; 4) the United Nations should observe the activities taking place in Korea; 5) all those concerned will set a date on which all foreign troops should be withdrawn from the peninsula; 6) the provisional legislatures in each zone should initiate constitutions which may be used as the foundation for a national constitution and; 7) until Korea becomes independent it should be the responsibility of the United Nations.33

By this date it had become obvious to Washington that its' position in Korea would not change for the better unless Russia was politically outflanked. It seems that the Americans believed that the best way would be through the use of collective, rather than bilateral diplomacy.

Although Great Britain and China accepted the American proposals, Moscow responded with a blunt rejection. That Russia was not inclined to depart from the letter of the Moscow Agreement was abundantly clear in Molotov's reply:

I consider it necessary to draw to your attention that the preliminary elaboration of measures to assist the formation of a provisional Korean democratic government, in accordance with the decision of the Moscow Conference

33 Ibid., p. 44.
of the three Ministers for Foreign Affairs, is to be carried out by the Joint Commission consisting of representatives of the Soviet Command in northern Korea and of the United States Command in southern Korea.  

Not long after Churchill's "iron curtain" speech of 1946 had sown the seeds of East-West mistrust the Americans openly attacked the Communists through Kennan's policy of containment and the Truman Doctrine. With American and Soviet forces facing each other across the 38th parallel, Korea swiftly became an ideological battlefront. In the developing "cold war" the struggle for Korea was of considerable importance and there was little assurance of an easy American victory. As far back as June 22, 1946, Edwin W. Pauley, the conservative personal representative of President Truman, had written perceptively to the chief executive concerning Korea's political future.

It is here where a test will be made of whether a democratic competitive system can be adapted to meet the challenge of a defeated feudalism, or whether some other system, i.e. communism will become stronger. Communism in Korea could get off to a better start than practically anywhere else in the world.  

American policy was now openly opposed to Russian policy, and Washington officials had decided that the

---

34 Ibid., p. 45.
35 Truman, p. 321.
best way to advance their position was through a collective approach. On September 17, 1947, while the Joint Commission talks were in their last weeks, Lovett notified Molotov of the new American approach.

In view of the fact that bilateral negotiations have not advanced . . . there is but one course remaining. It is the intention, therefore, of my Government to refer the problem of Korean independence to the forthcoming session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.36

---

36 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 60.
CHAPTER III

THE MILITARY OCCUPATION

The Americans Return to Korea

Implementing the Moscow Agreement by means of bilateral discussions was not the only task faced by the United States in Korea. The military occupation of south Korea presented the occupying authorities with a Pandora's box of formidable problems touching upon all aspects of Korean life, especially in the economic and political areas. That the Americans were ill-prepared to cope with the complexities of the situation is obvious from even a cursory glance at the record of the occupation. Some explanation for this may be found in the dwindling American interest in things Korean during the forty years of Japanese occupation. Also, characteristically, Americans at war have given much greater attention to the problems of military victory than to the question of post-war occupation of conquered territories. Finally the Koreans themselves, excluded from positions of responsibility during the Japanese tutelage were of little aid to the Americans in the technological and administrative aspects of military government.
Besides accepting the responsibilities of an occupying power without suitable preparation, the military government's attempt to guide the Koreans towards independence was further hampered by the lack of proper direction and coordination from superior offices. At first the American officials in south Korea received their orders, which in many cases were contradictory, from diverse sources of authority: sometimes coming directly from Washington and other times from MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo. This impeded the military government officials in their shaping of occupation policy. Also these officers tended to avoid any long range commitment pertaining to governmental reforms since they tried to guide their policies in accordance with the day to day proceedings of the joint discussions. At the commencement of the occupation the Americans turned to the Japanese for assistance, but this policy was dropped when it produced strong nationalist reaction from the Korean people. Washington had not anticipated the strength of Korean nationalism which also became a factor in obstructing the military government's attempts to modernize Korea. This modernization program was further stifled by the lack of a stable Korean economy.
The Korean economy was in a parlous state when the Korean Military Government (K.M.G.) established its headquarters in Seoul. Korea's economy, which had been closely linked to Japan's since 1943, was almost non-existent because industrial plants were either producing far below capacity, or as in most cases, completely closed down. (This situation resulted from the Japanese home government's policy of using Korean equipment to replace its own destroyed or worn out heavy machinery equipment in Korea.) In the latter part of the war nearly all attempts to supply Korea's economy with needed products were hampered by the intensive concentration of American submarines in the Sea of Japan. The situation was not completely hopeless, however, as Korea was physically untouched by the war.

Of similar importance to the nearly defunct economy was the unequal distribution of farm lands which left nearly everybody landless and without financial means. Under Russian occupation this problem was eliminated in the north by the confiscation of the Japanese-owned land and its redistribution among the peasants. But, in the south, conservative American and Korean officials blocked all attempts at land

---

1 U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 25.
reform: even a State Department official's mild suggestion that the government assist the peasants to buy land was vetoed.² Inasmuch as the Japanese owned most of the land one would think that the Koreans should have materially benefited from the Japanese surrender. But American policy, as expressed by one official, promised that "the Japanese [would] enjoy all freedoms without restraint or discrimination."³

The Korean people were quite perplexed as to who had lost the war. When it was suggested that the American authorities adopt the same type of land reform program in south Korea as being undertaken in Japan,⁴ the officer responsible for finding a solution to the land dilemma stated: "That's Communism. I won't have it."⁵

Although a concrete program was eventually adopted in 1948, it achieved only minor success in sustaining the sagging economy.


³Andrew J. Grajdanzev, "Korea Divided," Far Eastern Survey, XIV (October 10, 1945), 382.

⁴The American military government in Japan devised a plan where absentee land-owners would sell their land to the government which in turn would sell it to the peasants. The farmers would then be allowed to pay off this debt through thirty installments at low interest rates. Gayn, 16.

⁵Ibid.
In most cases the Americans failed to stabilize the Korean economy. During the three years of occupation $212,000,000 in financial assistance was pumped into the Korean economy, which seemed to be bottomless. The division of the country also aggravated the economic situation. On the positive side the K.M.G. did keep most south Koreans from starving, and it also indirectly aided the economy by increasing health services and education under the auspices of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA).

But economic problems in Korea paled to insignificance in comparison with the political problems, and the former were unlikely of solution until the latter had to some extent been resolved. The political record of the American occupation in south Korea is not an edifying one. As pointed out previously, confusions in aims, conflict of missions, lack of co-ordination in administration, an imperfect sympathy with Korean nationalism, and the pressure of the growing East-West conflict were contributory factors in producing this record.

6U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 32.

The man chosen to direct the occupation of south Korea, Lieutenant General John R. Hodge, was a competent officer, but his knowledge of Korea was limited. Before embarking for Korea Hodge was issued two orders: he was first directed by his immediate superior to "supervise the functioning of those agencies of the Japanese Imperial Government within the areas of their commands," and shortly thereafter the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff instructed him to,

(1) Take the Japanese surrender, disarm the Japanese armed forces, enforce the terms of the surrender, and remove Japanese imperialism from Korea; (2) Maintain order, establish an effective government along democratic lines and rebuild a strong economy as a basis for Korean independence, [and] (3) Train Koreans in handling their own affairs and prepare Korea to govern itself as a free and independent nation. While Hodge efficiently accomplished the first of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff's directives, he made little progress in the latter two.

Although Washington paid attention to the plans for accepting the Japanese surrender, it failed to offer any substantial solutions for the non-military problems which awaited the occupation army. None of


9Chung, p. 187.
the officials realized that because of their unpreparedness they gave too much responsibility to General Hodge; this was a great mistake since it is debatable whether even a politically minded commander could have achieved any success, considering Korea's chaotic situation.

The initial reaction to this lack of foresight was colorfully summed up by an officer attached to Hodge's headquarters:

"Thirty million people and they expect an untrained army of combat soldiers to become civilian administrators! This is bunk! Somebody in Washington made a serious error. They were never even prepared to enter Korea."  

Whether properly prepared or not, Hodge and his XXIV Corps disembarked at the seaport of Pusan on September 8. Unlike officials in Washington, the Korean people prepared for the American landings by organizing large welcoming committees. Although Japanese troops attempted to hold back the crowds at the Pusan harbor, three Koreans were able to free themselves in order to present personal greetings to Hodge. The three were immediately shot down by the Japanese soldiers under the pretext that the General's life was in danger. On the very day that he arrived in Korea, Hodge made his

10 Im, p. 242.

11 Pahk, p. 209. About a week before their entrance into Korea, the Americans dropped leaflets on the south notifying the natives of their proposed arrival. Ibid.
first overt, and perhaps his greatest mistake as 
Military Governor of Korea; he commended the Japanese 
troops for carrying out their police duties. 12 Quite 
understandably the Korean people were stunned when they 
heard that the American military commander had congrat­
ulated the Japanese instead of punishing them; nor was 
their dismay reduced when Hodge collaborated with 
Japanese officials.

Unfortunately most American officials looked upon 
Korea as a backward province of Japan and were inclined 
to view its inhabitants as loyal Japanese citizens. 
This attitude was to hinder American--Korean relations 
for some time. This distorted opinion about Korea's 
status went unchanged, even though Tokyo, made its 
contempt for Koreans clear in the following message 
to General MacArthur on August 28th:

Local Japanese authorities eagerly wait for 
an early arrival of the Allied forces which are 
to take over the maintenance of peace and order 
from the Japanese forces in southern Korea and 
urgently desire that the allied forces will 
fully take into consideration the actual con­
ditions on the spot before proceeding with the 
disarmament of Japanese forces and the transfer 
of administrative organs from Japanese hands. 13

12Im, p. 240.

13George M. McCune, "The Occupation of Korea," 
Foreign Policy Report, XXIII (October 15, 1947), 187.
This American--Japanese policy of ignoring the Korean people was reminiscent of the Taft-Katsura Agreement of 1905.

The American occupation army, unlike its counterpart in the north which possessed soldiers of Korean ancestry capable of managing civilian activities, turned to the Japanese for assistance. Believing that an easier administrative transition could be accomplished through a gradual adjustment, General Hodge allowed the former Japanese Governor General of Korea, Nobyuki Abe, to stay on in Seoul as an advisor.

Within a week Washington intervened, and General Abe was forced to return to Japan where he was arrested and tried as a war criminal because of his membership in the ultranationalist Imperial Rule Assistance Association. Although Hodge's unhappy decision to utilize Japanese skills in technical and administrative tasks might be defended on grounds of expediency, his greatest blunder was the incorporation of the hated Japanese military police into the K.M.G. police force. Even in his relations with Koreans, Hodge was inclined

---

14The Americans did not even bother to bring translators. Friedrich & Associates, p. 366.

15George M. McCune, "Occupation Politics in Korea," Far Eastern Survey, XV (February 13, 1946), 34. Abe had also been prime minister of Japan from August, 1939 to January, 1940.
to make use of educators and industrialists known for their collaboration with the Japanese, rather than those of nationalist orientation! Washington may, or may not have known the extent of the American—Japanese entente, but on September 18, ten days after the Americans entered Korea, White House officials sanctioned Hodge's course with a statement that "such Japanese as may be temporarily retained are being utilized as servants of the Korean people and our occupying forces only because they are deemed essential by reason of their technical qualifications. . . ."\(^{16}\) This attitude was most unlike the policy adopted by the Russians who had interned all important Japanese collaborators.

For about two weeks General Hodge ruled southern Korea without specific orders from Washington, but when it became increasingly obvious that he was misdirecting the occupation, his superiors began to pay more attention to Korean affairs. On September 22, the K.M.G. received a S.W.N.C.C.P. directive entitled "United States Policy for the Administration of Civil Affairs in Korea," which had been approved by President Truman.\(^{17}\) The orders directed that the Japanese advisors

\(^{16}\) McCune, Korea Today, p. 48

\(^{17}\) Friedrich and Associates, p. 360.
be immediately expatriated to Japan; except for the
detention of a few technicians these orders were
expedited.

Even after the initial shock of the K.M.G.—Japanese
collaboration subsided the Koreans did not lessen their
opposition to the occupation. Although the vast major-
ity of Korean people opposed trusteeship the American
government felt that Korea was not ready for independence.
The American attitude was clearly defined when Truman
stated that "the assumption by the Koreans themselves
of the responsibilities and functions of a free and
independent nation . . . will of necessity require time
and patience." 18 But K.M.G. actions suggested that the
occupation authorities cared little for Korean inde­
pendence. It was only after increasing pressure from
Korean nationalists and State Department officials
that Hodge dispatched speakers to the countryside in
order to inform the farmers of the political situation
in their country; the Koreans responded with stones
and eggs. 19 Such attempts to inform the Korean people
of the American commitment to Korean independence were
counteracted by other K.M.G. actions. Mature political

13 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean
Unification, p. 46.

19 Im, p. 245.
leaders seeking an audience with General Hodge were discouraged by American and Japanese military police. Pro-Japanese terrorist groups were reorganized under K.M.G. supervision to serve as the nucleus for a south Korean army. Such groups were also used to suppress leftist political organizations. The Korean police, who were responsible to K.M.G. officials made mass arrests in villages to "control seditious activities." Such action must have deeply undermined the Korean peoples belief that the Americans were guiding them towards independence.

Although Washington continued to stress that Korea was politically sterile, political activity within the country belied this view. The two chief political groupings were the Korean People's Republic, and the Korean Provisional Government. The former, led by Lyuh Woon Hyung was left of center and gained most of its support from the masses, while the latter group headed by exiles who had fled the country after the 1919 disturbances, was rightist orientated, receiving its greatest support from the upper middle

20 Ibid., p. 240.
21 Friedrich and Associates, p. 366.
class. The Korean People's Republic increased its influence during the early stages of the occupation, but this growing popularity only vexed the K.M.G. who believed that the party, if left alone, would eventually be led by pro-Soviet factions. In order to prevent such an eventuality, in late November Hodge adopted suppressive measures against the People's Republic. He explained his action to the native population in this manner:

I feel it necessary to the public understanding to announce that, regardless of what it calls itself, the Korean People's Republic is not in any sense a government.

I have today directed my occupation forces and the Military Government of Korea that the activities of any political organization in any attempted operations as a government are to be treated as unlawful activities... 23

The suppressive measures did not prevent an increase in the party's popularity, and by January 3, 1946, a correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor could report that "the so-called People's Republic, composed of Socialist and Communist elements, enjoys more popular support than any other single political group..." 24

Although the actions of some natives belied the

23 McCune, Korea Today, p. 49.
24 Ibid., p. 50.
American assumption that Koreans lacked necessary political and administrative skills, nationalist aspirations were continually thwarted by the K.M.G. This policy found support in General Hodge's firm belief that "military government is the only government in southern Korea." Ironically, Hodge was instrumental in advancing the cause of the politician who was to become the most effective spokesman of Korean nationalism, Syngman Rhee. Despite his claim to impartiality in Korean politics Hodge was on hand to greet Rhee when the ardent nationalist returned from his long exile in October. Rhee repaid this kindness by launching an attack on the American Government for delaying Korean independence. His command of the English language, his Washington contacts, and his political skills enabled him to become the guiding light for Korean independence in south Korea.

By November, 1945, Hodge had become extremely disillusioned as he tried to carry out his orders pertaining to the occupation in the face of constant attacks by Koreans of every political shade. There was little evidence of either political or economic progress in

25 Ibid., p. 46.
26 Ibid., p. 49.
27 Lien, 80.
the American zone and it was a very disenchanted Military Governor who told President Truman that:

The U.S. occupation of Korea under present conditions and policies is surely drifting to the edge of a political-economic abyss from which it can never be retrieved with any credit to the United States' prestige in the Far East. 28

Hodge considered the situation so desperate at the end of 1945, that he even went so far as to suggest that a simultaneous withdrawal of American and Soviet forces be arranged in order to "leave Korea to its own devices and an inevitable internal upheaval for its self-purification." 29

During 1946, the K.M.G. continued to struggle under the burden of ill-conceived occupations policies and were further embarrassed by the lack of proper communications between Washington and Seoul. On January 20, General Shtikov released a statement condemning American attempts at the Moscow Conference to extend the length of trusteeship to ten years. Hodge, under the impression that Washington had always backed the five year trusteeship plan, called the Russian commander a liar. Four days later the State Department informed Hodge that Shtikov was in fact telling the truth. One consequence of this unhappy incident,

28 Truman, p. 318.
29 Ibid.
resulting from the State Department's failure to keep Hodge informed of diplomatic decisions was a decline of pro-American sentiment among Koreans. In order to compensate for this situation, and to bolster the stumbling economy of the country, President Truman supplied Korea with $6,000,000 under the Government and Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) Act which Congress passed on August 2, 1946.

The favorable effects of policies of aid, as exemplified by GARIO, were too often offset by actions that induced only resentment among the Koreans. Such was the case of K.M.G.'s direction of the Korean police force, whose upper echelons were largely filled with persons previously employed by the Japanese. The Korean police were known for their acts of brutality which had been perfected during the Japanese occupation. Instead of abolishing such practices and reforming the police force, K.M.G. officials ignored the situation. One of the worst cases of brutality reported during the American occupation occurred on the island of

30Berger, pp. 65-64.
32Gayn, 16.
Cheju-do where police ruthlessly shot down marchers who were protesting against political and economic conditions. 33

Another dubious partnership developed by the K.M.G. was with Korean citizens who had been educated in the United States. Because of their American education and their knowledge of English some Koreans enjoyed a superior position in the esteem of the American officials. In many instances these people were given jobs for which they were ill-prepared while experienced individuals were ignored. One such inexperienced person was Gladys Koh who was appointed as chief of the women's police force in Seoul: she was chosen because she attended Wesleyan College in Georgia. 34 Not only were these poor selections in most cases but it also became obvious to General Hodge that K.M.G. would never gain the confidence of the people if it continued to exclusively deal with this small group. It became so clear to Hodge that collaboration must be enlarged that on February 15, 1946, he wrote Secretary of Defense Forrestal:

34 Pahk, p. 219.
We are opposed by a strongly organized ruthless military machinery designed to appeal to the millions of uneducated Koreans. The U.S. must do likewise and not be satisfied with dealing with wealthy U.S.-educated citizens. 22

Although Hodge was not inclined to place all his trust in these "wealthy U.S.-educated citizens" he nevertheless acknowledged, on the previous day, the convening of the Korean Representative Democratic Council; a political group which he personally selected. Designed as an advisory body it consisted entirely of conservatives, many of whom had collaborated with the Japanese. To many Koreans this group was reminiscent of the Central Advisory Council of the Japanese occupation. 36 Again the K.M.G. had blundered into provoking the Korean people against the American government.

Korean agitation for independence continuously hampered K.M.G. attempts to stabilize the political situation. At the end of August Syngman Rhee, now heading the Representative Democratic Council, commissioned a Korean nationalist, Yong-sin Im, to plead Korea's case at the United Nations. Before going to the U.N., Miss Im went to Washington, where she was refused an interview with President Truman; then

---

22 Millis, p. 135.
State Department official, John Williams of the Korean Affairs desk tried to persuade her to return home. At the U.N., Miss Im was ignored by all the big countries, pointedly so by the United States and the Soviet Union. In November, another attempt to make diplomatic contacts met with a similar response. Even when the K.M.G. sought to enlarge the political responsibilities of the Koreans their attempts backfired.

In order to silence popular outcries for increased political representation the Korean Interim Legislative Assembly convened on September 12, 1946. Half the representatives were popularly elected, resulting in a rightist victory, and the other half were selected by General Hodge. His attempt to balance the conservative representation by appointing some moderates and leftists met with strong disapproval from both American officials and the Representative Democratic Council which had refused to disband. Like its predecessor, the Representative Democratic Council, the Assembly proved to be a political nemesis to American policy-makers. Syngman Rhee, headed the

---

37 Im, pp. 254-256.
38 Tewksbury, p. 79.
40 After Rhee failed in his attempt to address the
Assembly and used its limited facilities to attack trusteeship and the K.M.G. On January 20, 1947, the Assembly passed an anti-trusteeship act, which caused the K.M.G. to respond that it "regard[s] as both wasteful and useless the discussions of problems whose solution is beyond the power of the legislature." 41

During the occupation American officials believed that without their presence the establishment of a democratic independent Korea could not be accomplished. Although the Americans professed such concrete occupation aims as the unification and independence of Korea, the K.M.G. had not been materially or intellectually prepared for the occupation. One of K.M.G.'s most obvious weaknesses was the unavailability of a responsible nucleus of administrators. By the time one group of soldiers were trained in administrative duties they were eligible for rotation, and were usually replaced by raw recruits. Hodge's problems were further complicated by the attitude of the typical American soldier toward the Korean. This attitude was reflected in the term usually applied to the Korean--"gook". 42 It was not designed to develop rapport between

U.N. the State Department tried unsuccessfully to keep him from returning to Korea. Im, p. 269.

41 McCune, Korea Today, p. 82

42 Oliver, Why War Came to Korea, p. 70
occupier and occupied.

Instead of attempting to establish some sort of fraternization the Americans preferred to spend as much time as possible "at his office, canteen, or club."\(^{43}\)

Although the Americans had no great feeling for the south Koreans, they liked those north of the 38th parallel even less. Many officials in Washington realized that Syngman Rhee was bothersome, even dangerous, to the K.M.G., but they also acknowledged that he was one of the few leaders who could rally the people against possible military threats from the north. When General Hodge did attempt to deflate Rhee's popularity by sponsoring other political personalities, such as Kimm Kiusic and Lyuh Woon Hyung,\(^{44}\) he met with strong opposition from American and Korean conservatives.\(^{45}\)

As the "cold war" intensified Rhee's political power was enhanced and consequently he had greater influence with the K.M.G. Because of the possible threat from the north, and to safeguard conservative rule in

---


\(^{44}\) As Lyuh Woon Hyung was mysteriously assassinated on July 19, 1947, it could be possible that the conservatives believed him to be too strong an opponent of Rhee.

\(^{45}\) Campbell, p. 173.
south Korea, the Rhee--K.M.G. coalition established a large defense force, the exact size of which was never made public. This organization received its recruits from three main groups: the police force; numerous private groups which were led by rightist political leaders; and youth movements, the largest having almost 500,000 members and led by Korean nationalist Lee Bum-suk who was later chosen by Syngman Rhee to be the Republic of Korea's first prime minister.

Another youth brigade was the National Youth Movement which numbered 70,000; the K.M.G. issued to this group 5,000,000 yen, military equipment, and an army officer as an advisor. American officials rationalised their actions in their customary fashion: in order to safeguard American democracy a strong defense system had to be built up along Communism's borders. On a visit to Korea, in 1947, Roger N. Baldwin, the then Director of the American Civil Liberties Union offered a different interpretation of the K.M.G.--rightist entente: "we have offered no constructive demonstration of democracy for its own sake as a counter-line to communism; . . . by

46 Osgood, p. 307.
47 Gryn, 16.
nurturing the police state we drive moderates into
the communist camp. . . . "48

By 1947, many American officials felt that it
would be in the best interests of the United States
to end the occupation. This opinion was prompted by
the miserable record of the K.M.G. and because Korea
was thought to be militarily unimportant for the
defense of American interests in the Far East.49
President Roosevelt's policy of a long-term trustee­
ship had to be abandoned because it had failed to
achieve results beneficial to the United States.
After two years of occupation the peninsula of Korea
was not under a government loyal to Washington.

The Abandonment of Trusteeship

The decision to abandon trusteeship and the mili­
tary occupation was not a haphazard one, but a judge­
ment made by many important officials over a lengthy
period. From the days of the Cairo Declaration
Koreans had overwhelmingly opposed trusteeship, and

48McCune, Korea Today, p. 88.
49"U.S. Decision to Quit Korea," U.S. News and
World Report, XXIV (May 7, 1948), 19. The estimated
annual cost of the occupation was $250,000,000. Ibid.
military occupation only increased this opposition. By the early part of 1947, General Hodge informed President Truman that "if it [trusteeship] is imposed now or at any future time, it is believed possible that the Korean people will actually and physically revolt." The establishment of the Interim Legislative Assembly under the auspices of General Hodge seemed to indicate that the K.M.G. was preparing to relinquish its responsibilities to the south Korean politicians, although the American commander denied that this was his intention. He pointedly reminded the Korean people that the United States had no desire to act independently of the Soviet Union:

Certain elements are creating the impression that the United States now favors and is actively working toward a separate government in Southern Korea; and that the Korean Interim Legislative Assembly is a completely independent body designed as a forerunner of that government. Both of the above assumptions are incorrect and dangerous conclusions, entirely without justification, and are contrary to the announced basic policies of the United States and the other great Allied Power who liberated Korea from the Japanese.

Although later events seemed to give lie to Hodge's remarks they may well have been sincere, as Washington was not always inclined to keep Hodge fully informed of their changing plans for Korea.

50 Truman, p. 318.
51 McCune, Korea Today, p. 81.
Washington supplemented its reports from the K.M.G. headquarters with other findings, especially those of General Albert C. Wedemeyer. In 1947 President Truman had commissioned Wedemeyer to investigate the situation in China and Korea, upon returning to Washington, he informed the President that "the United States has little military interest in maintaining troops or bases in Korea," if the Russians pulled out from the north.\(^{52}\) Concerning the future defense of Korea, he advised

That the United States organize, equip and train a South Korean Scout Force, similar to the former Philippine Scouts. This force should be under the control of the United States military commander and, initially should be officered throughout by Americans, with a program for replacement by Korean officers.\(^ {53}\)

He went on to say that "the establishment of a self-sustaining economy in South Korea is not feasible."\(^ {54}\) He concluded his report on Korea by suggesting that the Korean problem be passed on to the United Nations.\(^ {55}\)

Wedemeyer's suggestions were opposed by Secretary of State Marshall who advocated that a strong military

\(^{52}\)Truman, p. 326.


\(^{54}\)Ibid., p. 477.

\(^{55}\)Ibid.
government be continued in south Korea. But Marshall's viewpoint was not shared by other officials, such as the Secretary of War, Robert P. Patterson who, according to Secretary Forrestal, believed

That we should get out of Korea at the earliest possible time. He stressed the expense to the U.S. and the insignificance of the strategic and economic value of Korea.

The determination of the Eightieth Congress to reduce government expenditures also gave support to the conclusions of Wedemeyer and Patterson.

By late September, 1947, the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff decided that withdrawal would be the wisest course to pursue, both militarily and politically. Militarily they reasoned that "in the event of hostilities in the Far East present forces in Korea would be a liability . . . ." Furthermore they believed that the prospects of political unification would be advanced by the withdrawal of American troops.

The idea that unification could be achieved through peaceful means was held by few American or south Korean officials in 1947. In contrast to the failures of the

56 Millis, p. 273.
57 Ibid.
58 Truman, p. 325.
59 Ibid., p. 328.
K.M.G. in the south, the Soviets were doing a fairly good job in the north, and their following was increasing throughout the peninsula, though to a much greater extent in the north than in the south. Unification under such circumstances would probably have precipitated a power struggle between the ultra-conservatives of the south and the Communists in the north; a situation which neither south Korean nor American leaders desired.

Thus, with increased assistance and a military training program Washington believed that in the face of the continuing division of the peninsula, an independent state should be established in south Korea. But instead of pursuing a unilateral course in setting up an independent south Korea, American policy makers sought to gain the sanction of the United Nations for their plan. Not only would this show the world that the Americans, rather than the Russians, were interested in the future of the Korean people, but it would also reduce Washington's military and financial responsibilities in Korea through the use of collective security. If the Korean peninsula continued to be recognized as a nation which was temporarily divided, the United States would be unable to obtain military and diplomatic support from the United Nations in the
event the Communists attempted to upset the status quo in Korea. The United Nations Charter provided that "nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state. . . ." But, if the United Nations took part in establishing an independent state in south Korea the world body would also share responsibility for its future. Therefore, with the assistance of the United Nations, it seems that the United States hoped to achieve the first step towards its ultimate aim in Korea—the unification of the Korean peninsula under a government loyal to Washington, possibly through the future use of force.

In order to implement the plans for south Korea, Secretary of State Marshall announced in a September 17, 1947, speech at the United Nations, that "it is the intention of the United States Government to present the problem of Korean independence to this session of the General Assembly." On October 9, the Russians retaliated with Molotov's proposal that all foreign troops leave Korea so as "to give to the Koreans

60 United Nations Charter, Article 2, Clause 7.
61 U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 48.
the possibility of forming a government themselves. . . ." But the Americans rejected this suggestion. It was fine for Washington to call for free elections throughout the peninsula knowing that the Russians, who ruled only one-third of the population would never agree to such an arrangement, but to leave south Korea militarily unprotected might ensure a Communist victory in a possible civil war.

On October 16, the United States representative to the United Nations, proposed that a temporary commission be sent to Korea in order to supervise free elections as a requisite to Korean unification and independence. This suggestion was attacked on November 13, by Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet delegate to the United Nations, who believed the Americans intended "to bury or pigeonhole the entire Moscow Plan for the settlement of the Korean question and replace it with some special United States plan which apparently pursued its own designs in Korea . . . ." The American representative, John Foster Dulles, responded immediately by questioning the feasibility of Gromyko's counter-proposal to bring "duly elected representatives of the Korean people" to New York, and urging the Assembly to

---

62 Ibid., p. 49.
63 Ibid., p. 54.
authorize the immediate dispatch of a commission to Korea. Dulles emphasized the urgency of immediate action by the Assembly, arguing that the delay involved in selecting representatives from Korea "would have meant doing nothing as far as this year is concerned." He also stated that it would be highly unlikely that the south and the north would agree on the choice of the others representatives.

Accepting Dulles' advice, the Assembly adopted a resolution establishing the United Nation Temporary Commission on Korea (U.N.T.C.O.K.) by a vote of forty-three to zero, with six abstentions: the Soviet Union refused to recognize this action. The resolution designated Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, Philippines, Syria and Ukraine Soviet Socialist Republic as members of the Commission, but the Ukraine refused to accept a Commission seat in face of the Russian position on the resolution. The end result was a commission consisting of either American allies

64U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 65.
65Ibid., p. 66.
or recipients of American financial assistance. American policy-makers had accomplished their first important goal in their new offensive.

Headed by Kumara P. S. Menon of India, the Commission travelled to Korea but found its movements restricted to south Korea because of Soviet opposition to the United Nations resolution. Even in south Korea where U.N.T.C.O.K. launched a series of meetings with south Korean political leaders in June, 1948, the course was not an easy one. The most powerful of the south Korean politicians, Syngman Rhee, refused to recognize U.N.T.C.O.K., at first, because it would not acknowledge his claim to the entire peninsula. Later he adopted a more amenable attitude. Perhaps his original extreme position was taken to satisfy his ultra-nationalist supporters. In face of the continued refusal of the Soviet commander in north Korea to allow U.N.T.C.O.K. to enter his zone, the Interim Committee of the General Assembly, on February 27, passed a resolution, thirty-one to two with eleven abstentions, that "the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea will discharge its duties, that is to say, observe elections in such parts of

Korea as are accessible to the Commission, not later than 10 May 1948." Significantly, the negative votes came from members of U.N.T.C.O.K., Australia and Canada. Their attitude, as expressed by the Australian delegate to the United Nations, was that "in the event of threats from the North, the United Nations might be placed in the difficult position of having either actively to support, or else to renounce all responsibility for, the government it had established." But the two Commonwealth nations acquiesced to the will of the majority and, retained their status as Commission members.

In expectation of the establishment of the new state, Washington increased its financial aid to south Korea to provide a strengthening of its "constabulary" by an additional 15,000 men, making the overall strength 65,000; the United States also supplied the south Koreans with light military equipment. Heavy equipment was proscribed not only because of the mountainous Korean terrain, but also because Washington was

---

68 U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 71.
69 Goodrich, p. 47.
71 Later events proved the State Department wrong in its assumption that Korea was too mountainous for tank warfare.
apprehensive about Rhee's outspoken desire to unite Korea, even if it involved the use of force.

Preparations for the elections were carried out by U.N.T.C.O.K. and by the K.M.G., the latter increasing its propaganda concerning the advantages of a democracy and the use of the secret ballot with the hope of attracting more people to the polls in support of the American position.72 The Communists countered with a Coalition Conference held in north Korea on April 22 and 23, which attracted two hundred forty delegates from south Korea, including political moderates like Kim Koo and Kimm Kiusic, who joined in condemning a divided Korea. Returning home, the emissaries urged the south Korean people to boycott the elections as an expression of their dissatisfaction with the continued division of their homeland. General Hodge sought to offset the delegates' influence by condemning them as Communist instigators and, he went on to describe a bleak picture of Korean life if the population acquiesced in the wishes of the Reds.73

Although many Koreans, and especially the Communists, attempted to prevent the elections, they were

73 Ibid., p. 201.
held as planned with 71.2% of the eligible voters making a choice from about thirty-one parties all representing the political right. The results were a decisive victory for the conservatives who were unchallenged on the ballot by leftist groups. It is interesting to note that twelve of the fifteen members of the National Election Committee, which was responsible for accepting or denying candidates for the election, belonged to Rhee's Hankook Democratic Party. But in a "carefully worded" statement U.N.T.C.O.K. hailed the results of the election as:

[A] valid expression of the free will of the electorate in those parts of Korea which were accessible to the Commission and in which the inhabitants constituted approximately two-thirds of the people of Korea.

The validity of this statement is somewhat suspect when one notes that U.N.T.C.O.K. never had more than thirty

74U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, 83rd Cong., 1st Sess., July 30, 1953, Doc. 74, p. 23. Although 75% of the eligible voters showed up at the polls 38% of the ballots cast were blank or considered void. All statistics on the elections were secured from the Census Division of the South Korean Interim Government. Ibid.

75Ibid., p. 22.


men observing the pre-election events\(^{78}\) in an area embracing a population of 18,000,000.

Consequently many people did not believe that the elections were as calm as described by U.N.T.C.O.K. Between March 29 and May 10, five hundred and eighty-nine people were killed, and over ten thousand were arrested;\(^{79}\) hardly a typical situation before a "free" election. To offset leftist pleas to boycott the election the Americans increased their propaganda concerning the citizen's duty to vote and, the Korean police, under indirect American supervision, forced the people to the polls through various tactics. One method was to threaten the confiscation of the very scarce rice ration cards if the people did not vote.\(^{80}\) At the polls the people were met by the south Korean constabulary "with bayonets unsheathed" and, in some areas by groups of Rhee's terrorist youth corps who had been dispatched by K.M.G. officials as election officials.\(^{81}\) These "officials" and the sight of bayonets reminded the Korean people of their duty, as free citizens, to vote. That many Koreans, who might have boycotted the

\(^{78}\) Gordenker, p. 96.  
\(^{79}\) McCune, "The Korean Situation," 199.  
\(^{80}\) McCune, Korea Today, p. 229.  
\(^{81}\) Maxwell S. Stewart, "Blundering in Korea," Nation, CLXVI (May 22, 1948), 571.
election, were forced to the polls was admitted by General William Dean who was then the military commander of the K.M.G. Although he had dispatched American officials to observe the elections, their number was insufficient to cover all the polling stations in Korea, especially those furthest away from Seoul which went unobserved by either K.M.G. or U.N.T.C.O.K. officials. Considering the social structure of rural Korea one wonders how many peasants followed the "suggestions" of their village leaders on election day? Under such conditions, the outcome could hardly be viewed as the free expression of the south Korean people. Yet it was accepted as such by the United States and the United Nations.

The elections and the subsequent creation of the Republic of Korea through the agency of the United Nations can be viewed as a shrewd and successful maneuver by the United States. Now, not only was there a pro-West government in Seoul, but it owed its existence to the United Nations which seemed to indicate the latter was responsible for the future welfare of the newly independent country. In changing collective security from a slogan to a reality the Americans had scored a victory and strengthened their position in the cold war.

82 Dean and Wordon, pp. 148-149.
Considering the pro-American make up of the United Nations at that time it can be easily presumed that the United States was confident of securing such a diplomatic victory over the Russians. Yet with the creation of the Republic of Korea, American authorities were still faced with the same old problems: unification under a pro-western leader, and political and economic stability. Would the Republic of Korea become a showcase for democracy, or a convenient laboratory for documenting Communist charges against the western imperialists?
CHAPTER IV

THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Establishing the New State

The establishment of the Republic of Korea created as many problems for the United States, or left as many, as it resolved. Although the United Nations recognized the existence of the infant state, the United States was still most responsible for its upkeep which was complicated by the problem of unification. The two questions of how to stabilize the economic and political life of the nation and of how to unify it were so intertwined that one could not be separated from the other. Although the Republic's immediate antecedents were questionable, Washington attempted to strengthen the infant state by diplomatic recognition and by a continuous flow of military and financial aid. Thus the Republic of Korea became, like Greece, Turkey, and Iran a critical arena in the developing struggle between the two great world powers—the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In order to sanction the existence of the Republic and to aid in its development, the nation had to be diplomatically recognized; an event which divided the
peninsula even further. The initial step to stabilize the political foundations of South Korea was taken by the State Department on August 12, when it declared, in a press release, that "it is the view of the United States Government that the Korean Government so established is entitled to be regarded as the Government of Korea envisaged by General Assembly resolution of November 14, 1947."¹ In its attempt to stabilize the Republic's political status through diplomatic recognition the United States sought to ignore the issue of unification that lay at the heart of the problem. The importance of this issue to the Koreans was clearly recognized by General MacArthur in his speech at the new republic's inauguration ceremonies:

As the forces of righteousness advance, the triumph is dulled by one of the greatest tragedies of contemporary history—an artificial barrier has divided your land.

This barrier must and will be torn down.

Nothing shall prevent the ultimate unity of your people as free men of a free nation.²

It was not until the second week in December that the United Nations acknowledged that "there has been estab-

---

¹U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 101.

²Gunther, p. 169. On August 15, 1948, the State Department relieved MacArthur of his political responsibilities in south Korea, but as Commander of American Forces in the Pacific he was still responsible for the Republic's defense. Tewkesbury, p. 117.
lished a lawful government having effective control and jurisdiction over that part of Korea where the Temporary Commission was able to observe . . . and that this is the only such government in Korea; . . . .

3 On New Year's day the south Korean's status as citizens of a recognized nation was acknowledged by the United States Government's decision "to extend full recognition to the Government of the Republic of Korea." 4

Although the United States and the United Nations recognized the Republic of Korea, there were others who challenged this action. It was believed by world diplomats and those Koreans who opposed the May elections that the Soviets would retaliate by acknowledging the existence of a separate state in the north which would only further complicate the problem of unification. 5

This prediction became a reality four months after the election—with the establishment of the People's Republic of Korea. There was little question that the Soviets would support the north Korean government and, on October 13, Pravda quoted Stalin as saying that


4 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 78.

5 U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Relations, Background Information on Korea, p. 41.
"the Soviet Government expresses its readiness to establish diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the Korean's People's Democratic Republic . . . . "

Trusteeship had been brought to an end and, the Koreans had achieved self-government but, instead of being united they were separated by opposing "democratic" governments which ascribed to antagonistic ideologies.

When diplomatic recognition proved insufficient to stabilize and strengthen the Republic of Korea, especially after the appearance of the government in the north, Washington enforced its words with financial assistance. Up until the last day of 1948 the United States had financially assisted south Korea through the Government and Relief in Occupied Areas Act (G.A.R.I.O.), but in the following year these responsibilities were handled by the Economic Cooperation Administration (E.C.A.) which was an offshoot of the Marshall Plan. In its first year of operations the E.C.A., staffed by officials who were familiar with Korea, instituted a $60,000,000 aid program, which was to carry into June, 1950. In order to assure the

---

6McCune, Korea Today, p. 305.

7U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, p. 33.
Koreans of their economic future President Truman looked past this first E.C.A. program and planned for the following year. In the late spring of 1949 the Chief Executive appealed to Congress for $150,000,000, and:

[R]ecommend[ed] that the Congress authorize the continuation of economic assistance to the Republic of Korea for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1950. . . Without continuation of such relief, its economy would collapse—inevitably and rapidly.8

After long deliberation, Congress approved, on February 10, 1950, an amended version of Truman's original request.

In order to safeguard Rhee's government against external and internal military pressures and, to enable it to use the newly acquired funds to bolster the south Korean economy, Washington stepped up its military aid program. According to an agreement signed by the two nations the Commanding General of the American military forces was responsible for the organizing, training, and equipping of the South Korean army until the withdrawal of American troops from the peninsula.9 A short time later a supplementary agreement provided that "military

8U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 78.

9U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 15. By the August 24, 1948, agreement the American government was granted extraterritorial rights.
property . . . will be transferred to . . . the Republic of Korea from time to time as authority for such transfer is given by the Government of the United States . . . .

The first such transfer involved forty thousand Japanese rifles and an appropriate amount of ammunition which was used to equip the Korean constabulary.11 Although United States troops were still in Korea the Americans increased their military aid in anticipation of the day when south Koreans would be responsible for their own defense. When American forces withdrew in July, 1949, Washington handed over to the Seoul government military and naval equipment valued at $56,000,000, and, kept in storage in Japan an additional $1,000,000 worth of spare parts.12 Included in this transfer were: small arms and ammunition; rocket launchers and rockets, vehicles of all types; anti-tank guns, and ammunition; mortars and ammunition, and ships with $150,000 worth of spare parts.13

In order to establish a strong defense force, and to see that the above supplies were used to good

---

10 U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 105.

11 Goodrich, p. 87.

12 U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, pp. 33-34.

13 Ibid., p. 34.
advantage, President Truman informed Congress that "a military advisory group . . . will be retained in Korea after the withdrawal of United States troops."\textsuperscript{14}

As soon as the last American troops were withdrawn from the peninsula the United States Korean Military Advisory Group (K.M.A.G.) began to operate in accordance with its instructions "to advise the government of the Republic of Korea in the continued development of the Security Forces of that government."\textsuperscript{15} The last substantial military aid program before the outbreak of war was the passing, by Congress, of the Mutual Defense Assistance Act at the end of September, 1949. Through this Act, South Korea, Iran, and the Philippines shared an additional $27,640,000 worth of military equipment.\textsuperscript{16}

If American officials thought that systematic doses of diplomatic, economic, and military aid would stabilize the Republic of Korea they were grossly mistaken. During the first two years of its existence the new state did not attain a semblance of stability. Among the most

\textsuperscript{14}U.S., Department of State, \textit{The Record on Korean Unification}, p. 80.

\textsuperscript{15}Appleman, p. 13. This type of program was previously suggested by General Wedemeyer in his report on Korea.

\textsuperscript{16}U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, \textit{Background Information on Korea}, p. 35.
important reasons for this failure were the overwhelming desire on the part of virtually all Koreans for national unification and the quality of Rhee's administration. Rhee's government could hardly be described as democratic and in view of its almost complete reliance on the United States for military and economic essentials it could scarcely claim to be independent.

Attempts to Survive

From its birth on May 12, 1948, until the outbreak of the Korean War, the Republic of Korea was a classic example of chaos, corruption, and instability. Political assassinations occurred indiscriminately with such leaders as the leftist Lyuh Woon Hyung and the once moderate, turned rightist, Kim Koo being mysteriously murdered. Even within the rightist government, groups vied with each other for prized positions in the ministries. 17 Another factor which hindered stability was the apathy of the south Korean people who believed that their future would be shaped by the "cold war", and not by themselves. 18

While Washington officials thought they could lessen

---

17 Im, p. 291.
18 Ibid., p. 295.
their military responsibilities by establishing the Republic, Syngman Rhee and his followers thought otherwise. Once advocates of foreign troop withdrawals, the south Korean politicians changed their minds when it became known that north Korea had a well-trained army; they also feared internal disturbances. While the Seoul officials took a dubious view of the quality of their own troops, it was "the judgement of the responsible American military representatives in the field that the state of combat readiness of the Korean forces was such as to justify the withdrawal of American forces, . . . ."\(^1^9\)

South Korean officials attempted to persuade Washington to keep a substantial force in Korea, but American officials would not defer to the obsessive fears of invasion and subversion that plagued the Korean leaders. Because of these fears the Republic of Korea was a virtual police state as the Rhee government ruthlessly suppressed all opposition to its policies. For its external security the Seoul government attempted to compensate the loss of American forces by extending military training to rightist groups, such as General Lee Bum-suk's Korean Youth Movement and General Lee Chung

\(^{1^9}\)U.S., Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, p. 6.
Chien's Daidong Youth Corps. Also their fears quieted somewhat with the belief that American military withdrawal would be swiftly reversed if the Communists struck southward. This view possessed some validity, especially as the Joint Chiefs-of-Staffs, in 1947, reported that the American military position in the Far East would be impaired if "The Soviets established military strength in south Korea capable of mounting an assault on Japan." 

The view that the United States would defend the Republic of Korea from external Communist aggression lost much of its strength when an increasing number of reports began to circulate that Korea was definitely not in the American defense perimeter. One such incident occurred in March, 1949, when British journalist, G. Ward Price reported General MacArthur as saying:

   Our line of defense runs through the chain of islands fringing the coast of Asia. It starts from the Philippines and continues through the Ryukus Archipelago, which includes its main bastion, Okinawa. Then it bends back through Japan and the Aleutian Island chain to Alaska. 

---

21 Truman, p. 325.
That Rhee was disturbed by such reports is clearly indicated in his remarks to John Muccio, the American ambassador, when the last American troops were leaving Korea. Rhee pointed out:

The question is not when or whether American troops are withdrawn. The question is: What are the policies of the United States in regard to Korea.\(^2\)

The South Korean leaders' fears of invasion were, at least, equaled by their fear of internal upheaval. Developments in 1948 proved their fears to be well-grounded, although clearly part of the internal unrest was of their own making. Few Koreans cared about their country's relation to the cold war, they were more interested in acquiring food, obtaining jobs, and in bringing the police state tactics of the government under control. The first overt expression of the people's opposition to the Rhee government occurred in October, 1948, when the Republic's Fourteenth Army revolted, and seized the southern towns of Yosu and Surchon.\(^2\) Although the insurrection was put down by trusted troops from Seoul, many rebel leaders escaped into the hills, and continued to harass Rhee's government

\(^{2\text{3}}\) Oliver, *Why War Came to Korea*, p. 233.

by organizing guerilla bands. Officials blamed the revolt on Communist instigators, but specialist in Korean affairs, Channing Liem reported "that the recent army revolt in South Korea was caused at least as much by police unpopularity as by the Communists." Police brutality had been accepted by the K.M.G., and by the summer of 1948, the police were aided in their questionable actions by a number of youth organizations. Trained by American personnel the police, the army, and the youth corps forcefully assured Rhee of continued support.

Time and American aid did little to improve the character and stability of the Rhee government, and by June, 1950, the Republic was on the verge of collapse. Inflation had become rampant, military attacks increased along the border areas, and guerilla warfare became more intensive. In addition, Rhee was losing his grip on the political machinery of the country. Although seeds of destruction had been sown at the Republic's birth, it was the impact of events in the ten months preceding the war that almost destroyed any semblance of South Korean independence, and caused one American observer, E.C.A. labor advisor, Stanley Earl, to note that, "the

25 Dean and Wordon, p. 143.
26 Liem, 79.
oppressed South Koreans [would] have rebelled against the Rhee government had not the war broken out."\(^\text{27}\)

From mid-summer to the end of 1949, the Republic had to contend with border clashes, defection, internal dissatisfaction, and a runaway economy. At the beginning of August North Korean forces moved into the northwest Ongjin Peninsula but they were repulsed; about five weeks later the crew of a privately owned steamship defected to North Korea; and in early October, Rhee reported that two hundred and forty-nine guerillas were executed on Cheju Island, an area which had strongly opposed the 1948 elections.\(^\text{28}\) By the end of the year, the Republic was suffering from inflation as prices had increased ten fold during the past few months, while only twenty percent of the industrial potential was being utilized, and unemployment was as high as thirty percent in some provinces.\(^\text{29}\) Owen Lattimore, a specialist in Asian affairs, prophetically summed up the situation:

\[
\text{The army cannot be trusted to fight, the people do not trust the government; the government cannot be depended on, and does not depend on itself: it appeals for continued American} \]

\(^{27}\text{Gunther, p. 183.}\)

\(^{28}\text{U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, \textit{Background Information on Korea}, p. 69.}\)

\(^{29}\text{Oliver, \textit{Why War Came to Korea}, p. 153.}\)
occupation and protection. If there is to be a civil war, South Korea would not be able to subdue North Korea without a great deal more American help than is now available. North Korea would be able to overrun South Korea without Russian help, unless stopped by American combat troops.\textsuperscript{30}

Instead of mending its ways in 1950 the Rhee government increased its efforts to destroy all of its opponents, and because of the corruptness of the officials involved, failed to strengthen the Korean economy. American officials became increasingly frustrated over Rhee's tactics and on many occasions threatened to abandon him. As winter changed into spring the Republic of Korea moved closer and closer to a state of political and economic anarchy.

During the second week in January, Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, in speaking about the American defensive perimeter in the Far East announced that in some places, including Korea, "no person can guarantee these areas against attack."\textsuperscript{31} While Korean officials were familiar with this aspect of American foreign policy, the statement made to the National Press Club, had a depressing effect on the Korean people who felt they had been abandoned by the United States. Korean


\textsuperscript{31} Appleman, p. 83.
nationalist Im Young-sin stated that Acheson's speech placed the Republic in a position where it "was leaning far over a precipice, ready to fall at the slightest touch."  

Acheson's speech was hardly designed to check Korea's political and economic disintegration which continued apace. In the latter part of January, a New York Times correspondent, Walter Sullivan reported that a group of South Korean troops had defected to the Communists. His interpretation of their actions were:

Here, as in China, the Government on the whole has been bucking this tidal wave of revolution rather than riding it. In responding to the pressure of communism, reforms that were contemplated have been trodden under.  

Following up stories concerning the political instability of the Republic, correspondent Sullivan came across a typical case of police brutality. The son of a blind farmer was killed during an "armed rice collection by the police. The official explanation, . . . was that the policeman had meant to shoot the farmer's dog."  

At a higher plane Rhee's inability to cope with the

---

32 Im, p. 299.
34 Ibid., February 1, 1950, p. 13.
financial problems of his country brought a statement of disapproval from the American House Committee on Foreign Affairs:

The Department of State has sent instructions to Ambassador John J. Muccio to make it abundantly clear to President Rhee that the Korean Government must put its financial house in order if it expects continued American aid. 35

After six months of debating, Congress hesitantly approved President Truman's plea for $120,000,000 in aid for Korea. Even though Congress approved the bill the legislators were not overly endowed with confidence on the future of the Rhee government. The House of Representatives amended the bill by pledging to cut off aid if the Republic's cabinet included "one or more members of the Communist party or the party now in control of the government of northern Korea." 36

The fears expressed by the Congressmen were not unfounded, for by the end of February the guerilla war which was nearly two years old was spreading, and border raids on both sides of the 38th parallel seemed to be increasing. As the anti-Rhee forces gained strength the Seoul government countered by increasingly ignoring the civil liberties of its citizens.

35McCune, Korea Today, p. 313.

During this period many people were killed by Rhee's police and, some people lived long enough to be sentenced to death by the South Korean courts. One such case involved fourteen of the nation's leading journalists and writers who were accused of spying; they were all shot.37

As Rhee's government felt less secure it increased its effort to weed out possible subversives, which meant anyone who opposed the government's viewpoint. In March, a group of one hundred and ninety-six people were arrested on suspicion of planning a revolt.38 But the most sensational episode of Rhee's witch hunt was the conviction of thirteen former members of the National Assembly who were accused of "conspiring against the Republic."39

While Rhee was able to suppress his opponents at home he had less success in dealing with the United States Government. Washington had always disapproved of Rhee's handling of the Republic's finances, and at the beginning of April the State Department issued a

37Im, p. 303.

38U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 69.

39U.S., Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, p. 22.
strong note to the Korean Ambassador, John M. Chang, requesting that something be done to rectify the economic situation. The American Ambassador in Seoul, John J. Muccio, was recalled for consultations concerning financial problems.

But the economic difficulties were quickly overshadowed by indications of war. Towards the end of the month Rhee claimed that his forces had captured six hundred Communists who had moved south of the 38th parallel on March 27. Whether or not Rhee's statistics were accurate is unimportant, but they do indicate that the violent anti-Rhee forces were not small pockets of dissenters. Rhee was under attack from within and without.

One of the most important events of the immediate pre-war period was the election of the General Assembly on May 30. Rhee desperately tried to postpone the elections until November because of the chaotic conditions in the Republic, and because he feared the possible loss of his political leadership. This fear manifested itself in government attacks upon any of

---

40 U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 72.

41 U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, p. 140.
its political opponents who showed any intention of talking to the U.N.T.C.O.K. officials about the election. These people were arrested and in many cases charged as Communist agents. But Rhee had little, if any, power over American public opinion which had been aroused by his autocratic methods, and the State Department "strongly suggested" that the Korean leader proceed with the elections. The results were disastrous to the established parties, and particularly to Rhee's organization. Over 65% of the newly elected representatives were independents. This election not only stimulated further opposition to the Seoul administration, but it also suggested the possibility of ousting Rhee and his clique at the next elections. In order to further emphasize the plight of the Koreans the North Korean army, on the night before the elections, had bombarded the border city of Kaesong; Rhee was being softened from within and without.

During the three weeks prior to the outbreak of the

---

42Gordenker, pp. 162-163.
43Chung, p. 208.
44U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 72.
45U.S., Department of State, The Conflict in Korea, p. 23.
war there was a growing restlessness amongst the Korean people. The North Koreans issued two pleas for national elections, and dispatched three representatives south to discuss unification with the Rhee government, but these men were arrested by the South Korean police. A further weakening of Rhee's position occurred in the new Assembly where he was confronted by a strong opposition. One day after the commencement of the war, the United Nations Commission on Korea (U.N.C.O.K.) reported that "the initial sessions [of the new Assembly] have indicated the determination to tackle the Administration in a critical spirit for its numerous shortcomings." On the opening day of the new Assembly the North Korean legislature passed a resolution which called for the merging of the two assemblies as a prerequisite to unification. But Rhee dismissed the proposal as propaganda, and continued his wholesale arrest of political opponents. One measure of Rhee's determination to stay in power were the some fourteen thousand political prisoners waiting to go on trial

46 Ibid., p. 42.
47 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 97.
48 Tewksbury, p. 156.
at the outbreak of the war.\textsuperscript{49}

The American viewpoints on Rhee and his so-called democratic nation were numerous. At the top of the American political ladder was President Truman who realized the instability of the south Korean republic, but accepted the situation in order to keep south Korea out of the Communist camp. Truman knew that:

Syngman Rhee is a man of strong convictions and has little patience with those who differ from him. . . . I do not care for the methods used by Rhee's police. . . . Yet we had no choice but to support him.\textsuperscript{50}

Another American viewpoint is expressed by General William Dean who had served as military commander of the K.M.G. He had believed that the south Korean people truly felt that Rhee and the Republic were representatives of the majority view. But after his capture Dean was:

Struck by the fact that if the people of South Korea resented the northern invaders, they

\textsuperscript{49}Gunther, p. 188.

\textsuperscript{50}Truman, p. 329. In response to a reporter's question on the importance of Korea to the United States' defense strategy, Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee explained: "I don't think it is very greatly important. It has been testified before us that Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines make the chain of defense which is absolutely necessary. And, of course, any additional territory along in that area would be that much more, but it's not absolutely essential." U.S. News and World Report, XXVIII (May 5, 1950), 30.
certainly weren't showing it. To me, the civilian attitude appeared to veer between enthusiasm and passive acceptance. I saw no sign of resistance or any will to resist.\textsuperscript{51}

It becomes obvious that by the time the war began the Republic of Korea was in a very precarious situation.

Unification or Death

"We hereby reassert that it is our firm, unanimous determination that our people will either live together or die together in our struggle for the complete restoration of our country..."\textsuperscript{52} Those were the words of President of the Republic of Korea, Syngman Rhee in a speech to the First Congress of the Republic. Unification under a Seoul government had always been Rhee's primary goal, and even during the initial build up of Soviet troops in the north he clamoured for war against these overwhelmingly superior forces. In a speech to the Korean people he explained:

I advocated unification, ... so that we could drive the Russians from the north.... We must fight those who are not our friends. As soon as the time comes, I'll instruct you. Then you should be prepared to shed blood.... America is our friend.... I have already made connections abroad.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{51}Dean and Wordon, p. 87.

\textsuperscript{52}\textit{U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948}, p. 74.

\textsuperscript{53}Rovere and Schlesinger, p. 110.
Rhee was the leading advocate of unification by force but he was reinforced by other southern politicians. When they proclaimed the Republic's constitution in July, 1948, it became evident that unification was their prime aim. Article Four proclaims that "the territory of Korea shall consist of the Korean peninsula." Article Six states that "the mission of the national military forces shall be to perform the sacred duty of protecting the national territory." Therefore, according to the constitution, the South Korean army had the legal right to operate in the north. This was contrary to the General Assembly's resolution of December 12, 1941, which recognized the Republic of Korea's claim to only that area of land which was south of the 38th parallel. The opposition of the Rhee government to the U.N. interpretation of the Republic's territory was clearly expressed by one of Rhee's cabinet ministers:

What was discussed with the U.N. Commission is that peaceful unification of South and North is nothing more than a political plot. The only way to unify South and North Korea is for the Republic to regain the lost land in North Korea by force.

---

54 U.S., Department of State, Korea, 1945 to 1948, p. 79. Later the North Korean constitution also proclaimed sovereignty over the entire peninsula.

55 Ibid.

56 Toover and Schlesinger, pp. 110-111.
As many times as Seoul politicians advocated war the State Department threatened to discontinue American aid, although Washington officials failed to stop the numerous border skirmishes. In an interview for the New York Herald Tribune a few months before the outbreak of war, Rhee declared:

South Korea is strong enough to take Pyongyang in a few days... If we had our own way we would, I am sure, have started up already. But we had to wait... The American government keeps telling us, No, no, no—you are not ready.57

Even after three years of war Rhee would not deviate from his intention to unify Korea by force. When approached by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on the possibility of signing an armistice, Rhee replied that:

In case the idea of simultaneous withdrawal is found unacceptable to either or both of the negotiating parties, I beg of you to allow the Koreans to continue the fighting, for this is the universal preference of the Korean people to any decisive armistice or peace... 58

Although Rhee finally made a verbal agreement to abide by the truce, the Republic did not become a party to the official armistice. On the eve of his overthrow in 1960 Rhee's views remained unchanged, as revealed in his remarks to Army correspondent, Charles S.

57 Gunther, p. 188.

58 U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, p. 83.
Stevenson:

South Korea could reunify the country by force if given weapons and logistic support. As for fighting that might ensue, the Koreans are ready to undertake it themselves and ask no man power contributions from the United States or other friendly countries.59

It is obvious that the South Korean government was at least as aggressive as the North Koreans; but the question is, how aggressive? At the outbreak of the war the North Koreans were condemned as aggressors by the Americans, and subsequently by the United Nations. But, taking into consideration the relationship between north and south this label becomes a very ambiguous one. The Oxford Universal Dictionary defines aggression as "an unprovoked attack; the first attack in a quarrel; an assault."60 If one is to accept this definition then neither side, or both should be considered aggressors. Taking into consideration the atmosphere of corruption, rebellion, and apathy in the south, could it be possible that the Seoul officials felt very insecure in their positions, and believed that through a war for unification they could strengthen their positions? Instead of waiting for a probable internal upheaval

59 Charles S. Stevenson, "D + 10 Years," Army, X (June, 1960), 64.

did the desperate South Korean officials provoke the nervous foes in the north into attacking the Republic? Were they desperate enough to believe that the United States and the United Nations would rally to their support, if the two were convinced that the Republic had been attacked? The Americans were in a very precarious position at this time as shown by the remark of the State Department's George Kennan: "If they disgrace themselves [the South Koreans] and make a lot of trouble for us, they will make it impossible to support them, but to the extent we can support them we think we ought to do it."61 The South Koreans might have been confident that they would receive assistance from the Chinese lobbyists in Washington, and other Americans who were seeking ways to compensate the loss of China. Although American officials had previously stated that Korea was outside their defense perimeter there was a chance that Washington might use a Communist attack to strengthen its policies of collective security and containment. Did Rhee copy the unification plan used by the Sardinian statesman Cavour in the latter's attempt to unify Italy in the nineteenth century?62

61 Goodrich, p. 90.

62 Cavour, who was trying to unify Italy, made an agreement with Napoleon III of France in which the former agreed to assist the Sardinians if Austria was
Although the Republic's soldiers were lightly equipped, many American officials, such as K.M.A.G. commander, Brigadier General William L. Rolunts, and William C. Foster, the deputy administrator of E.C.A. had officially stated that the South Korean army was the best military force in Asia. 63 Equipped with such a force did the South Koreans believe they could overpower their northern neighbors, or could their plan have been to just delay the North Korean forces until the Seoul government received external assistance? The above questions and suggestions may never be answered or proven, but they must be acknowledged and investigated.

The Attack

The official American view of the attack was clearly defined by the Deputy Representative to the United Nations, Ernest A. Gross, when he declared that "an attack of the forces of the North Korean regime... constitutes a breach of the peace and an act of aggression." 64 But the events leading up to and

---

63 Rovere and Schlesinger, pp. 112-114.

64 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 87.
surrounding June 25, 1950, raise serious questions about the validity of such an interpretation.

By June 24, the Republic of Korea was near collapse, while in the north, the economy had been growing steadily since 1946. Although many South Koreans welcomed the armies from the north it seems strange that the Communists would want a war with all of its national and international implications rather than to await the almost inevitable collapse of the Rhee government. If North Korea had planned to attack on the twenty-fifth, why was Russia absent from the United Nations? How much substance is there in the belief that even if Moscow knew about the attack it considered the seating of Red China in the United Nations more important?

The non-Communist world has been repeatedly told that the North Koreans planned their attack well in advance, and that they had a modern well-equipped military force which went into action on June 25. Yet in a series of articles from Korea, the New York Times reported that the North Korean forces were poorly equipped, having weapons which were at least eight years old, and some were of World War I vintage; 66


and that the weather, the rainy season having started, made modern mobile warfare extremely difficult. The newspaper also reported that although the North Koreans were supposed to have had large stocks of weapons they did not replace their destroyed tanks by new ones, and another point of interest was that "the North Korean Army had not carried out its mobilization plan at the time the war began June 25..." A similar interpretation of the unpreparedness of the North Koreans is put forward by General Dean who had seen many North Korean soldiers pitifully armed with pitchforks and homemade weapons. According to Allen S. Whiting, a specialist on the Chinese participation in the Korean War, the North Koreans had not received any tanks or heavy equipment until April, 1950, which gave them little time to train, equip, and organize an army which was not familiar with modern Russian weapons.

---

67 Ibid., June 25, 1950, Sec. 1, p. 21.
68 Ibid., July 30, 1950, Sec. 1, p. 1.
69 Ibid., July 31, 1950, Sec. 1, p. 1.
70 Dean and Wordon, p. 102.
Much attention has also been fixed on reports, produced by the United Nations observers in connection with the outbreak of the war. One such statement, offered a day before the start of hostilities, informed the New York headquarters that:

No reports, ... have been received of any unusual activity on part of North Korean forces that would indicate any impending change in general situation along parallel.

South Korean commanders' ... instructions do not go beyond retirement in case of attack upon previously prepared positions.72

It is obvious that this party of observers saw nothing of any suspicious nature; a very probable conclusion considering that this group, which was responsible for observing the situation along the one hundred eighty-five miles of the 38th parallel, consisted of three members,73 only one being a military officer possibly capable of detecting a concealed atmosphere of impending belligerency. The United Nations had never dispatched a large group of observers into the field and this party of three, representing U.N.C.O.K., had supposedly carried out the impossible task of inspecting the military situation along the 38th parallel.


73 Gordenker, p. 298.
within a two week period. Such an operation could never have been much more than a farce considering the number of men involved and the size of the area to be investigated.

A day after the completion of this U.N.C.O.K. observation tour the war commenced. Not even one United Nations observer witnessed the start of hostilities as the Commission, bedded down in Seoul, was informed of the North Korean attack by the Foreign Minister of the South Korean Government about eight hours after the invasion began. The official report to United Nations headquarters, made a little over two months later, informed the world body that:

On Sunday, 25 June 1950, at 1:30 p.m. (Korean Time), [U.N.C.O.K.] was officially informed by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea that the territory of the Republic had been invaded early that morning by the armed forces of the North Korean authorities, and was still under attack along the 38th parallel of latitude. Note that U.N.C.O.K. Officials were not spectators to the attack. It also seems that they were being ignored by the Seoul government for they were not informed of the invasion until the American Ambassador Muccio had already reported the early morning's events to Washington.


75Goodrich, p. 104. U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, p. 11.
Although U.N.C.O.K.'s responsibilities were "to observe and report any developments which might lead to or otherwise involve military conflict in Korea," they failed to notice any preparations for a large scale invasion, even with the fluid migration of refugees crossing the border. Realizing that the approximately eighty-five members of U.N.C.O.K. lived in Seoul this lack of surveillance is understandable, and as field observation was almost null, would it not have been possible for a larger than usual group of South Korean soldiers to have entered enemy territory? Considering that both sides had made numerous previous incursions on to the others property, might not a larger than usual foray by South Korean forces have provoked the North Korean commanders into a premature all-out attack against the south?

If such an incident did occur it seems probable that the K.M.A.G., which was directing the South Korean Army and which was acting as an advisory body to those troops closest to the border, would have planned or at least have had knowledge of this venture. But, since the capture of an American soldier in North Korea would have been difficult to explain, it is unlikely

---

76 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 85.
that American advisers moved north. Correspondent Lloyd Norman in the June, 1960, issue of Army reports that "the ROK 17th Regiment, first to take the brunt of the attack, had five U.S. advisors who were flown out [of the combat area] in two Army liaison planes." It seems strange that these Americans who would have been needed to keep the South Korean ranks together in face of the advancing enemy were removed, but this action would be quite justified if the ROK 17th Regiment had taken "the brunt of the attack" while north of the 38th parallel. Accepting the interpretation that the invasion was a surprise and, considering that the military situation throughout South Korea was completely chaotic, especially in the air where the North Korean air force went unchallenged, the swift and supposedly unplanned air rescue of the two advisors becomes somewhat of a mystery.78

77Lloyd Norman, "Washington's War," Army, X (June, 1960), 44.

78K. Sawyer, Military Advisors in Korea: KMAG in Peace and War, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), pp. 114-115. The official KMAG historian describes the military events of the day but does not give any reasons for the removal of the two advisors. While plans had been prepared for the evacuation of American nationals in danger of loss of life a similar program had never been established for K.M.A.G. officials. Contrary to Washington's orders Ambassador Muccio directed K.M.A.G. officials to evacuate their forces from Korea but this command was swiftly reversed by orders from the Pentagon. Ibid., pp. 112, 121.
Other obscurities surrounding the attack concern the operations of K.M.A.G. and its personnel. During the late spring of 1950, K.M.A.G. was involved in a changeover of its top personnel, most of whom returned to the States. It is possible that the North Korean government saw this transitional period as an opportunity to destroy the South Korean forces, but it also appears that the Seoul Government feared the possibility of military abandonment "since the United States appeared to be losing interest in the military defense of the Republic of Korea, [and] K.M.A.G.'s future was at best dubious." On the day that the hostilities started the acting K.M.A.G. commander, Colonel Wright, was in Tokyo awaiting his impending transfer, but he was immediately ordered back to Korea. While Wright had been with K.M.A.G. since 1948, during which time he familiarized himself with all phases of Korea, especially its terrain, he was later relieved of his duties and left Korea on August 4, 1950. It seems strange that a man with Wright's knowledge of the Korean scene should be released from duty when the war was going so

79 Ibid., p. 113.

80 The regular commander had completed his stay of duty in Korea.

81 Sawyer, p. 138.
badly for the United Nations forces. Possibly his release was a result of a communication sent to him on the afternoon of the invasion by General MacArthur in which the latter told Wright:

Return to your former positions. Momentous decisions are in the offing.\textsuperscript{82}

While the wording of these two messages appear dubious enough they become even more so when K.M.A.G. historian Sawyer reports that "although several sources \[Wright and his subordinates\] mention this second message \["momentous decisions"] the writer has not found a copy in the files available to me."\textsuperscript{83}

What were the "momentous decisions"? Were they President Truman's decision to fight the Communists, and was this action connected with the recent visit of important American officials to the Far East? In Tokyo, seven days before the attack, Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, General Omar Bradley, conferred about military matters with the Commander-in-Chief of the American forces in Asia, General Douglas MacArthur.\textsuperscript{84} At the same time, a former American Representative to the

\textsuperscript{82} Appleman, p. 40.

\textsuperscript{83} Sawyer, p. 125.

\textsuperscript{84} Norman, "Washington's War," 43.
United Nations, and a consultant to the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles was visiting the Republic of Korea and, its famous 38th parallel. In his book, *War or Peace*, which was published in early 1950, Dulles expressed his belief that "in South Korea we have responsibilities due to the fact that we were in occupation of that area and primarily sponsored its transition to independence." On June 19, six days before the attack, Dulles told the South Korean National Assembly:

The American people give you their support, both moral and material, consistent with your own self-respect and your primary dependence on your own efforts.
You are not alone. You will never be alone as long as you continue to play worthwhile your part in the great design of human freedom.

Finally, on the day of the attack, Dulles in Tokyo cabled the State Department that "to sit by while Korea is overrun by unprovoked armed attack would start a disastrous chain of events leading most probably to world war." The Dulles episode raised many questions in the minds of numerous observers around the world. French reaction was subsequently described by historian

---


86 Goodrich, p. 85.

Alexander Werth:

Many French observers felt that the whole thing wasn't quite above board; Mr. Dulles' visit to Korea and to the 38th parallel only a few days before the outbreak seemed "curious coincidence;"89

Another incident which may, or may not, be relevant to the dubious atmosphere of the attack, was presented by writer, John Gunther. While a guest of General MacArthur, in Tokyo, Gunther was told by an officer who had just returned from a telephone call concerning the attack:

A big story has just broken. The South Koreans have attacked N. Korea.90

Who was initially responsible for the events of June 25? On June 26, the events of the previous day seemed less important than the plea made by the South Korean National Assembly to the President and the Congress of the United States: "We appeal for your increasing support and ask that you at the same time

88 This was the same John Foster Dulles, who, as Secretary of State in the Eisenhower cabinet advocated that the United States Government "make it publicly known that it wants and expects liberation to occur," in the Communist countries, cited in John Spanier, American Foreign Policy Since World War II ("A Praeger Paperback;" New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1962), p. 100.


90 Gunther, p. 165.
extend effectively and timely aid in order to prevent this act of destruction of world peace." 91

It was now time for the Seoul Government to wait; the world and the United States had been notified of the events of June 25. History had immediately shifted from Korea to Washington where the leaders of the United States contemplated their future moves. The status-quo had been broken; something had to be done.

91 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 94.
CHAPTER V

THE KOREAN WAR

The American View of the War

There was no question as to the United States coming to the aid of the South Koreans in repelling the invaders. A plea for aid was completely unnecessary. The only questions were on the nature of the aid and, how the United States was to effect it, through a collective approach or unilaterally. This is apparent to anyone who examines the American interpretation of the war.

The June 25, attack was viewed by Washington as a calculated Russian offensive in the continuing world contest between the Soviets and the Americans. The idea that the North Korean action might have been interpreted as an unfolding civil war, rather than an unprovoked attack on South Korea was never seriously entertained by American officials. Few Americans questioned the explanation offered by President Truman on the Communist movements: "The attack upon Korea makes it plain beyond all doubt that communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent
nations and will use armed invasion and war."¹ To Truman it was obvious that "we were fighting in Korea for our own national security and survival."² The American president viewed the attack in a similar light to the aggressions of the thirties, and believed that if force was not met by appropriate action another World War would be imminent. According to Truman, the Russians, like the Nazis before them, were gambling on the assumption that no one would challenge their military moves.³ Before discussing the action taken by the United States, we should attempt to see if military acts by Russia warranted such an interpretation as put forward by the President.

If we are to accept the Russian aggression thesis advanced by Truman and his advisors then it seems quite logical that the strategists in Moscow should have selected an area for its military action which was not so obviously close to a large concentration of American forces. In June, 1950, American troops were scattered thinly throughout the world, except in two areas, Western Europe and Japan. Accepting the belief

¹U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 99.

²Truman, p. 389.

³Ibid., p. 355.
that Russia would want a swift victory, why would she attack Korea, which was so close to Japan, instead of advancing an invasion against Iran, Afghanistan, South-East Asia,\textsuperscript{4} or other such vulnerable areas? American officials were not ignorant of this fact, for according to the then Army Chief-of-Staff, General J. Lawton Collins:

\begin{quote}
The Communists picked the worst place in the world at that time to start a war... It was one place to which we could move troops quickly. The Communists could not have picked a place more favorable to us.\textsuperscript{5}
\end{quote}

Not only is it unlikely that Russia would want to attack Korea but it is very doubtful whether the Soviets anticipated invading any country at that particular time. Although the Russians were developing their atomic and hydrogen bombs they were primarily concentrating on the development of defensive weapons as "they labored under the illusory concept that we were building to strike them there [Europe]."\textsuperscript{6} Soviet apprehensions on being attacked by American forces and the absence of serious thinking concerning offensive wars was also

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{4}Lloyd Norman, "Lightening-Joe Talks," \textit{Army X} (June, 1960), 50.
\item \textsuperscript{5}Ibid.
\end{itemize}
elucidated in a paper presented to an American military studies group. In it the author stated that during the post-war period the Soviets put more stress on the manufacturing of short-range "defense fighters" than on any other aerial weapon. Nevertheless, knowing that the Soviet state was ill-prepared for an offensive war, the United States under the direction of President Truman prepared itself and its allies to meet the situation in Korea on the grounds that it was an act of Russian aggression.

The armed forces of the United States seriously undermined by public pressure for demobilization ever since V-E day, and because of American reliance on its new atomic stockpile, was now augmented. Military strategists believed that the armed services were dangerously undermanned and were far below the accepted standards for combat readiness, but they were not in a position before June 24, 1950, to do anything because of public opposition to rearmament. But the American people responded immediately to Truman's plea for assistance, and on June 28, Congress extended the draft and passed legislation making it easier to call up the National Guard. Whereas on July 1, 1950, Army strength


8Truman, p. 338.
stood at 593,000 men, the lowest figure since World War II, a year later it had climbed to 1,532,000, and in July, 1952, the Army reached a wartime peak at 1,596,000 men. In 1950 the three armed services had a total of 1,500,000 men and this increased to 3,500,000 by the end of the war. This buildup in men was paralleled by an increase in defense expenditures which rose from $14.8 billion in 1950 to $56.9 billion by 1952. Needless to say this spending of federal funds was a great stimulant to the American economy which was in the midst of a recession. But not all of America's military and economic might was directed towards Korea.

As Washington believed that the events of June 25, were directed from Moscow, American policy-makers feared possible invasions elsewhere and consequently took military and political precautions throughout the world, especially in South-East Asia. A day after the attack President Truman ordered the American 7th Fleet into


the Taiwan Straits in order to guard Formosa from a possible invasion from mainland China, and introduced a new program of increased military and financial aid for South-East Asia. In order to establish a counterbalance to Communist China efforts were accelerated to sign a peace treaty with Japan, which was finally accomplished in September, 1951. "Urgency has [now] been given to the negotiations of a peace treaty with Japan,"\(^{13}\) stated Secretary Acheson to the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations Committee dealing with General MacArthur's dismissal. And to ease the burdens of the American forces in Europe, the West German Republic was asked to supply military forces for the defense of the Continent even though the Bonn government did not officially join N.A.T.O. until 1955.

Further moves were made to strengthen Western Europe when American troops were readied for Continental duty and allies were urged to contribute additional forces to the defense of their homelands. In order to strengthen Washington's position in the world-wide contest against Communist aggression, N.A.T.O. forces were unified under an American commander. Unofficially General Dwight D. Eisenhower took over command of the Allied forces during

\(^{13}\)"Acheson Report," *Current History*, XXI (1951), 98.
the Brussels Conference of foreign ministers on December 19, 1950, and officially he became SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers in Europe) commander on April 2, of the following year.14 Thus, the United States, not only increased its own, and its Allies' strength, but also rearmed its former enemies in order to combat the rising threat of Communist aggression.

At the outbreak of the Korean War, because the United States was the established leader of the West and the dominant power in the United Nations, Washington decided that American interests could be best advanced within the framework of the world organization. According to President Truman, the Korean situation "was the test of all the talk of the last five years of collective security."15 Nearly a year later, in June, 1951, Secretary Acheson reiterated his superior's words: "This was a test which would decide whether our collective security system would survive or would crumble."16 In the contest between East and West the

14 General Eisenhower headed SHAPE for only one year as he left that office to seek the Republican nomination for President. He was replaced by another American, General Matthew B. Ridgway.

15 Truman, p. 334.

American President made it quite clear to his allies that he would use all possible means to combat this Communist attempt to change the status quo; the United States "considered the Korean situation vital as a symbol of the strength and determination of the West."17 Another reason for the establishment of an United Nations--United States entente goes back to November, 1947, when the Republic of Korea had become the responsibility of the United Nations. Therefore the Communist invasion of South Korea could be viewed as an attack on the principles of the United Nations and a challenge to the concept of collective security.

In Defense of South Korea

From the moment that Ambassador Muccio styled the North Korean action as "an all-out offensive against the Republic of Korea,"18 the American Government19 began to build its case against the Pyongyang Government as the aggressor; the perpetrator of an "unprovoked

17Truman, p. 339.

18U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1950, p. 21.

19For a list of the major officials responsible for the direction of American policy during the Korean War see Appendix B, p. 211.
attack", 20 the agent of the Communist drive to world
domination. The initiation of this policy became apparent
when Ernest A. Gross, the American Deputy Representative
to the United Nations, after being briefed by White
House officials, asked United Nations Secretary General
Trygve Lie for an emergency session of the Security
Council, because the "attack of the forces of the North
Korean regime . . . constitutes a breach of peace and
an act of aggression." 21 At the meeting Gross further
declared:

> It is an invasion upon a State which the
United Nations itself, by action of its General
Assembly, has brought into being. It is armed
aggression against a government elected under
United Nations supervision.

Such an attack strikes at the fundamental
purposes of the United Nations Charter. Such an
attack openly defies the interest and authority
of the United Nations. Such an attack, therefore,
concerns the vital interest which all the members
of the United Nations have in the organization. 22

The American delegate also proposed that the North
Korean Army withdraw its troops from south of the 38th
parallel.

20 After North Korean planes had attacked Kimpo
Airport in Seoul, an American official on the spot was
reported to have said: "This thing is serious. They
strafed an American plane. That's destruction of
American property." Caldwell, p. 168.

21 U.S., Department of State, American Foreign
Policy, 1950-1955, 11, Publication 6446, General
Foreign Policy Series 117 (Washington, D.C.: U.S.

22 Ibid.
Using Article 1, Clause 1, of the United Nations Charter, the Security Council, minus the Soviet delegate who was boycotting the world organization, by a vote of 9-0 with Yugoslavia abstaining, adopted the American proposal calling for the withdrawal of North Korean forces from South Korea. President Truman promptly thanked the Security Council for its swift action and assured it that the United States, acting in accordance with the resolution, would "vigorously support the effort of the Council to terminate this serious breach

---

23 For Article 1, Clause 1, of the United Nations Charter, see Appendix A, p. 201.

24 On July 27, the Soviet representative to the Security Council, Jacob Malik, returned to his seat after his country had terminated its six month boycott against the United Nations in protest against that organization's decision not to admit Communist China.


26 It appears that the legality of United Nations involvement in the Korean War is questionable as both the constitutions of the North and of the South proclaim sovereignty over the entire peninsula. This would mean that the ensuing conflict was a civil war and therefore, according to Article 2, Clause 7, of the United Nations Charter which forbids "the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state . . . ;" the Korean War would be outside United Nations jurisdiction. — The 38th parallel was never recognized by the Koreans, and this attitude seemed to be shared by some Americans, for a pre-war report to the House of Representatives stated that "military conflict in Korea would mean the most barbarous civil war." U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 41.
of the peace."  

By Washington's actions of June 27, it becomes obvious that the United Nations was now functioning as an instrument of American foreign policy. On that day, at 12 noon, President Truman announced that he "ordered United States air and sea forces to give the Korean Government troops cover and support." Actually American forces had been ordered into action on the previous day but the announcement was delayed in order to secure the maximum results from the positioning of the ships and planes. By introducing naval and air forces, Washington had by-passed Article 41 of the United Nations Charter which states that peaceful means be used to restore peace; instead the United States followed Article 42 of the Charter which calls for the use of armed forces only after the belligerents have failed to comply with the actions initiated by the previous article. The American Government's

27 U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1950, pp. 16-17.


interpretation of their military action was explained by Secretary Acheson when he told a news conference that "After June 25, . . . all action in Korea has been under the aegis of the United Nations." The legality of Washington's use of the United Nations is questionable as the United States did not adhere to the sequential order of action as laid down in the United Nations Charter, and the Security Council did not call for military support of the South Korean Government until 10:45 p.m., June 27, ten and three quarter hours after President Truman's speech in which he ordered American naval and air forces into action.

On the afternoon of June 27, the permanent American delegate to the United Nations, Warren R. Austin, informed the Security Council that the North Korean Government had ignored the Council's plea to withdraw its forces from the Republic of Korea, and that fighting was still continuing. Ambassador Austin read President Truman's speech offering American aid.

---

31 U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, p. 62.

32 U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, p. 141.

33 U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1950, p. 23.
and he proposed that the members of the United Nations assist the Seoul Government in expelling the Communists. Under Article 2, Clause 5, of the Charter, the Council adopted the American proposal exactly as stated by Austin, and promised to "furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in the area." Washington had already acted on this matter; the Truman Administration was working overtime during the convenient absence of the Soviet delegate to the United Nations.

While the American Government carried out its policies with unprecedented dispatch and by dubious methods, it clearly wanted to prevent an escalation of the conflict into another world war. This is the reason why Chiang Kai-shek's offer, on July 3, to supply thirty-three thousand men for the Korean conflict was tactfully refused by the American President. At first Truman had been inclined to accept the Nationalist

---

34 For Article 2, Clause 5, of the United Nations Charter see Appendix A, p. 203.

35 U.S., Congress, House, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Background Information on Korea, pp. 47-48.

Chinese offer, but after listening to Acheson's arguments that such action would alarm Washington's allies and increase the possibility of Chinese Communist involvement, the President changed his mind. Another expression of the American desire to limit the scope of the war came by Secretary Acheson when he stated that "the action, pursuant to the Security Council resolution [of June 27, 1950] is solely for the purpose of restoring the Republic of Korea to its status prior to the invasion from the north . . ." This statement was intended to keep the Allies loyal to the war effort, and to pacify possible Russian and Chinese fears of American action north of the 38th parallel.

After obtaining the sanction of the Security Council for military operations against the North Koreans, American officials through the United Nations Command, were able to direct the United Nations forces throughout most of the war. In order to co-ordinate military activities Secretary General Lie suggested that the military command be given to an American who would be responsible to a military council composed of representatives from Australia, France, India, New

\[37\] Appleman, p. 46.

\[38\] U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1950, p. 25.
Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom. Washington rejected this plan; on July 7, the Security Council passed a resolution establishing an army, and requesting "the United States to designate the commander of such forces;" Truman named MacArthur to head this new force. Secretary General Lie's suggestion would have made the war effort truly an United Nations action, but because the Americans supplied most of the troops (aside from the Republic of Korea forces) and material, Washington wanted a relatively free hand in directing the war. Therefore the United Nations Command with MacArthur as its head, received its orders not from the world organization, but from President Truman and the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff. MacArthur also reported first to the White House and the Pentagon, and then to the officials at Lake Success. So although sixteen nations eventually contributed military forces to the unified command the United States had the dominant role in directing the course of action, perhaps to a greater degree than the American contribution warranted.

In order to respond successfully to the United Nations resolutions for assistance it became necessary

---

39 Goodrich, p. 119.

to complement the naval and air units by ground forces. On June 29, President Truman approved General MacArthur's request for the use of ground units, and the bombing of military targets in North Korea. The first American troops were used primarily to delay the advancing North Koreans while the United Nations Command built up its forces. During July and August the Communist army continued to push the American and Republic of Korean troops towards the southeast corner of the peninsula, and the seaport of Pusan. Here the North Korean advance was checked and the United Nations forces were able to make some modest gains. Then, on September 15, MacArthur launched a successful invasion on the western port of Inchon, subsequently slicing the North Korean forces in two. This markedly eased the pressure on the beseiged troops in the Pusan perimeter, and with their eventual breakout and tie up with the Inchon landing force, the United Nations army pushed the North Koreans back across the 38th parallel. On the last day of September MacArthur's troops were at the 38th parallel; they had triumphantly restored "the Republic of Korea to its status prior to

41 Truman, p. 341.
the invasion of the north . . . . 

The United Nations Move North; the Communist Chinese Move South

Now that the United Nations forces had successfully expelled the North Koreans from the Republic of Korea, and at the same time destroying much of the Communist army, Washington believed that the war should be extended north of the 38th parallel. While the Americans saw the opportunity of unifying Korea by force, neither they nor their allies wanted to expand this limited conflict into a world war. The United Nations with the United States being the most emphatic, assumed that the war could be contained to the Korean peninsula because they did not believe that the Chinese Communists would intervene militarily in Korea on behalf of the Pyongyang Government. It seems that Washington's optimism was based on three possibilities: that the Peking Government was not strong enough to oppose the United Nations

---

43 U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Crisis, 1950, p. 25.

44 On September 11, President Truman agreed that United Nations forces should cross the 38th parallel if the proposed Inchon landings of September 15, were successful, and if the Chinese and/or the Russians did not enter the war. Truman, p. 359.
forces and that the Chinese were only bluffing in order to "save face" in Asia; that United Nations troops could easily capture North Korea before the Chinese would be able to offer resistance and thus Peking would be confronted by a fait accompli; or that if the Chinese did enter the war in time to do any damage they would be utterly defeated. The American project to move north and its execution were not results of haphazard, but rather of cautious and systematic planning.

One of the most important phases of the American plan to forcibly unify Korea was the attempt to convince the Communist bloc, and especially China, that the United Nations command did not want to extend the war elsewhere. As early as June 28, when American forces first entered the conflict, President Truman told a National Security Council meeting "that operations above the 38th parallel should be designed only to destroy military supplies, for I wanted it clearly understood that our operations in Korea were designed to restore peace there and to restore the border." A couple of day's later, Secretary Acheson publicly echoed the President's words by presenting his own interpretation of the situation in his "return to the

---

45 Truman, p. 341.
status quo" speech. 46 These two soft approaches concerning the containment of the war were swiftly followed by a proposal made by the American representative in the Security Council in which he warned that outside interference on behalf of the North Koreans might enlarge the conflict. 47 Even as late as October 1, the day that the first United Nations troops crossed the 38th parallel, President Truman directed a plea to mainland China in which he hoped that "the people of China will not be misled or forced into fighting against the United Nations and against the American people, who have always been and still are their friends." 48

The Americans seemed to have believed they had scared the Chinese and Russian Communists, if perhaps only momentarily from entering the conflict, and therefore prepared to cross the 38th parallel. This belief became obvious when the American representative to the Security Council attempted to rationalize his government's viewpoints on the moral grounds of a threat to

---

46 Supra, p. 148.


48 Wilcox and Kalijarui, p. 422.
world peace. According to him, "the aggressor's forces should not be permitted to have refuge behind an imaginary line because that would create the threat to the peace of Korea and of the world."\textsuperscript{49}

So with relative ease the Americans prepared to cross the 38th parallel in their first attempt to unify Korea forcibly. On September 27, the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff ordered MacArthur, as Commander of the United Nations Forces:

1. [T]o pursue the North Korean Army over the 38th parallel in order to utterly defeat them
2. to establish Syngman Rhee as President of the unified country
3. to stay clear of Manchuria and U.S.S.R.
4. to use only Korean troops along the northern border regions.
5. to retreat south of the 38th parallel if large Russian-Chinese forces are sighted.\textsuperscript{50}

Four days after MacArthur received his orders troops of the Republic of Korea under the United Nations Command, accompanied by an American advisor,\textsuperscript{51} unceremoniously crossed the 38th parallel, and moved north.\textsuperscript{52} Because MacArthur believed that the South

\textsuperscript{49}Goodrich, p. 130.
\textsuperscript{50}Appleman, p. 607.
\textsuperscript{51}New York Times, October 2, 1950, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{52}General MacArthur wanted to broadcast the news of the United Nations movement across the 38th parallel but this request was vetoed by Secretary of State Marshall, who preferred to see the results of the move before commenting on it. Truman, p. 361. General MacArthur moved his troops across the 38th parallel
Korean forces were not capable of defeating the Communist army, and inasmuch as the General Assembly had resolved that "all appropriate steps be taken to ensure conditions of stability throughout Korea,"\(^{53}\) American troops entered North Korea on October 7.\(^{54}\) On the days that MacArthur launched his primary and secondary invasions into North Korea he issued statements demanding the unconditional surrender of the routed North Korean army.\(^{55}\)

As the United Nations forces swiftly moved north towards the North Korean capital of Pyongyang, President Truman decided that this was the appropriate time to meet General MacArthur in order to get a first-hand report on the military situation; especially the

---

six days before the General Assembly passed the resolution giving him such authority. The General Assembly took over the responsibilities of the Security Council when the use of the Soviet veto rendered the Council useless. Whiting, p. 113.

\(^{53}\) For excerpts of the Resolution of October 7, 1950, see Appendix A, p. 205. The legality of this resolution and the subsequent events are quite questionable as it was not until November 3, that the General Assembly accepted the American proposal that the former relieve the Security Council of its responsibilities concerning the Korean War.

\(^{54}\) Appleman, p. 622.

intelligence reports concerning Chinese troop movements in Manchuria. On October 15, the President flew to Wake Island in the Pacific where MacArthur, confident of victory by Thanksgiving, dispelled Truman's anxieties over possible Chinese or Russian intervention. The General believed that if the Chinese intervened they would be slaughtered because of their lack of air support. Similar opinions were held by the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, and plans were drawn up for the transfer of troops from Korea to Europe as soon as they became available. Reassured that the United Nations forces would be able to unify Korea, and that the Chinese would not come to the assistance of the Pyongyang government, President Truman returned home.

Nine days after the Wake Island Conference, on October 24, the United Nations Command ordered most of its troops north because the rounding up of the last remnants of the North Korean forces was progressing too slowly. During the next week MacArthur continued

---

56 Although the Chinese Communist troops entered North Korea on October 14th they did not come into contact with United Nations forces until October 25th. Whiting, p. 116.

57 Appleman, p. 760. The grounds for Truman's anxieties over the possible Chinese intervention are discussed infra, p. 158-159.

58 Ibid., p. 761.

59 Goodrich, p. 140.
to push his troops further north and contrary to Washington's promise to its Allies of deploying only Korean troops near the Manchurian border, the General, ignoring the Pentagon's orders, moved American troops into border positions.60 The over-confident MacArthur became slightly apprehensive when his advance units reported sighting Chinese forces, and on November 5, the General notified the United Nations that "it is apparent to our fighting forces, and our intelligence agencies have confirmed the fact, that the United Nations are presently in hostile contact with Chinese Communist military units . . . "61

MacArthur and many others were surprised that the Peking Government had ordered its troops into Korea although the Chinese had never masked their opinions on this point. To the Communists, intervention was a way of enhancing their rising influence in Asia for "Peking could [not] aspire to Asian leadership so long as it appeared unwilling, or unable, to influence events on its borders."62 If the Communists refused


61 Canada, *Department of External Affairs, Documents on the Korean Crisis*, p. 9.

62 Whiting, p. 50.
to acknowledge the plight of the North Korean government the Peking officials would stand out as hypocrites. They would be contradicting Mao Tse-tung's famous dictum that "the peoples of all countries menaced by U.S. aggression should unite and struggle against the attacks of the U.S. reactionaries and their running dogs in these countries."63 By the middle of August Peking had decided to go to war.64

The first indication of the Chinese Communist's interest in the Korean conflict appeared in the July 26, issue of a Peking newspaper. It charged that the Americans were in Korea "to change it into a gangway of aggression for the United States on the borders of China and the Soviet Union."65 As the United Nations forces moved towards the 38th parallel the Chinese stepped up their warnings against extending the war to North Korea. In late September, the Acting Chief of Staff of the Chinese Communist army informed the Indian ambassador to Peking that the Chinese government would not "sit back with folded arms and let the


64 Whiting, p. 187.

65 Ibid., p. 57.
Americans come to the [Chinese] border." In another discussion between the Indian diplomat and a Peking official, this time Foreign Minister Chou En-lai, the ambassador was told by Chou that the Chinese did not care if South Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel, but that Peking vehemently opposed similar action by the Americans. One of Chou's strongest verbal attacks came the day before the first United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel when he stated that "the Chinese people ... will not supinely tolerate seeing their neighbors being savagely invaded by the imperialists." Although American officials were not ignorant of Peking's opinions and the warnings from New Delhi, they dismissed them as being groundless; that is until MacArthur discovered that they were genuine.

When it became obvious to MacArthur that the Chinese were in Korea he immediately sought to check the infiltration at the source. He requested that Washington approve his plan to bomb the bridges over the Yalu River, the boundary between Manchuria and Korea, in order to stop the southward flow of additional men and machines.

---

65 Ibid., p. 93.
67 K. M. Panikkar, In Two Chinas (London: George Allen & Unwin Limited, 1955), p. 110. The author was the Indian Ambassador to Peking during the Korean war.
68 Whiting, p. 93.
The Joint Chiefs-of-Staff acknowledged the situation, but ordered MacArthur to destroy only the south end of the bridges. This limited response was the result of the continuing American policy to stay within the framework of the United Nations, and not to extend the war beyond the Korean peninsula. The orders from the Pentagon were clarified for MacArthur in a State Department communique which explained that:

Because of the necessity for maintaining optimum position with the United Nations policy and directives and because it is vital in the national interests of the U.S. to localize the fighting in Korea it is important that extreme care be taken to avoid violation of Manchurian territory and airspace and to report promptly hostile actions from Manchuria.69

During November, the United Nations forces made contact with an increasing number of Chinese Communist units which had crossed the frozen Yalu river. But by the third week of the month there had still been no large direct confrontations with the new belligerents. About this time reports began to appear in Washington suggesting the possibility of giving Red China a seat at the United Nations if Peking removed its troops from Korea.70 This possibility became purely academic when

69Truman, p. 376. During the War the Communists used Manchuria as a sanctuary and a supply depot while the United Nations safely used Japan and Okinawa for similar reasons.

70Lee and Menschel, p. 211.
November 24, MacArthur ordered his "end the war" offensive; it turned into a nightmare when, two days later the Chinese cut through MacArthur's thin line of defense and drove the disjointed United Nations forces south.  

On December 1, the United Nations, possibly to show the Chinese Communists that it intended to keep its troops in North Korea, or as a negative response attempting to salvage the territory held by the United Nations forces, called for the establishment of an agency which would be responsible for the rehabilitation of Korea. This organization, named the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (U.N.K.R.A.) was later to be headed by a retired American general, John B. Coulter, who was a long time friend of Syngman Rhee.  

The establishment of this organization strengthened the Peking Government's conviction that the Americans had to be driven from North Korea. The Chinese

---


74 Reeve, p. 115.
Communists could not accept a status quo whereby unfriendly forces would be within striking distances of its industrial complexes in Manchuria.

**Truman vs. MacArthur**

With some of the American military leaders and the Truman administration already at odds over the method of fighting the Korean War there was a further widening of opinions when the Chinese Communists entered the conflict. While the White House and the Pentagon continued to believe that the war should be limited to the Korean peninsula, MacArthur and his followers wanted to extend the war to China, both sides contending that their method was certain of producing victory. This difference of opinions was further compounded by MacArthur's unwillingness to follow Washington's orders. MacArthur's course may well have been influenced by his experiences during the Second World War. During that war American military commanders had been allowed to make more field decisions than their counterparts in the other armies; but this was not the case during the Korean conflict where the Administration kept a close watch over the military situation. When the General ignored Washington's orders in such matters as the deployment of troops along the Yalu River, and the

\[74\text{Supra, p. 157.}\]
scope of the war, President Truman interpreted such actions as a definite challenge to the well-established principle of civilian control of the military. Furthermore, increased public recognition of the policy split might arouse the American population into choosing sides; this would only weaken the nation, the administration, the Democratic Party, the war effort, and the peace of the world. Truman recognized the confrontation but as MacArthur had a large following, the President had to wait for a suitable situation to arise before he could dismiss the General from his duties.

In addition to the civilian-military debate the Truman Administration markedly increased its problems by accepting the theory that world communism, in the guise of the Peking Government, was firmly committed to aiding the North Koreans. American fears of a possible world conflict were further strengthened by the fact that the Peking Government had recently signed a military treaty with the Soviets; to President Truman this meant "that . . . the Chinese were Russian satellites." The logic of the President's opinion was carried one step further, when the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, discussing the possibility of fighting a large

---

75This was the Sino-Soviet Treaty of February 14, 1950.
76Truman, p. 399.
war with Communist China, proposed that "the United States should develop its plans and make preparations on the basis that the risk of global war is increased." The thought of Russia aiding China was not looked upon favorably by the European allies of the United States whose borders were within easy striking distance of the Soviet armies. Nor, much to the disappointment of Washington, were the European allies as enthusiastic about fighting the Chinese in order to unify Korea as they had been in fighting the North Koreans. Consequently the Truman administration, which did not propose to stand alone against the growing threat of communism, had to follow a less aggressive policy in the field, a tighter rein on MacArthur's desire to carry the war across the Yalu. As Secretary Acheson explained: "We cannot expect that our collective security system will long survive if we take steps which unnecessarily and dangerously expose the people who are in the system with us."  

To the Truman Administration a war in China loomed as a nightmare. Such a war threatened the United States with the loss of its allies, who not only feared the possibility of a Russian military offensive in

77Ibid., p. 378.
western Europe, but also the loss of a lucrative trade which many of the allies, particularly the Commonwealth countries, had built up with the Chinese Communists. Also the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff could not spare the needed men for such a gigantic campaign as such a move would drastically weaken the American commitment in western Europe. Not only was there just one Army division, stationed in the United States, available for immediate combat duty, but the call-up and training of the national guard units could not be accomplished at least until March, 1951.\textsuperscript{79} The Administration’s viewpoint on a Chinese war was clearly defined, in June, 1951, by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff, Omar Bradly when he stated that "to have extended the fighting to the mainland of Asia would have been the wrong war, at the wrong time, and the wrong place."\textsuperscript{80}

General MacArthur and his followers, disagreed with the Administration's opinions on China and limited war; in their view there was no military or political difference between North Korea and China. The views of America's European allies carried little weight with this group, as they believed that the United States was unilaterally capable of handling

\textsuperscript{79}Truman, p. 386.

\textsuperscript{80}Ibid., p. 446.
any military situation. Many of these, especially the so-called "China lobby" saw the extension of the war as a way of returning Chiang Kai-shek to his "rightful place." MacArthur saw only one way to end the Korean conflict, and that was with the unconditional surrender of all Communist forces in Asia. In order to accomplish this feat he wanted to bomb Manchuria, blockade China, and to employ Nationalist Chinese troops against the mainland. MacArthur's viewpoints were also shared by most of his subordinate officers, some of whom were to later occupy his

81 It would seem that MacArthur's long stay in Asia, which covered an interrupted span of fifteen years, had made it difficult for him to form a world-wide perspective of the situation.


83 U.S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws, The Korean War and Related Matters, 84th Cong., 1st Sess., January 21, 1955, p. 8. At these hearings were General Mark Clark, United Nations Commander, 1952-1953; Lieutenant General George E. Stratemeyer, United Nations Air Force Commander, 1950-1951; General James Van Fleet, Commander of the American Eighth Army in Korea, 1952-1953; Lieutenant General Edward M. Almond, Commander of the American Tenth Corps in Korea, 1950-1951; and Admiral C. Turner Joy, the senior United Nations delegate to the Korean peace talks. These gentlemen all agreed with General MacArthur's theories on the Korean War, and in addition, they advocated that the United States abandon the United Nations, and sever all diplomatic relations with every Communist country.
position as Commander of the United Nations forces. In opposition to the beliefs held by the Truman Administration, MacArthur and his followers did not think that the United States could provoke the Russians into a world war, for as General Mark Clark explained:

I do not think you can drag the Soviets into a world war except at a time and place of their own choosing. They have been doing too well in the cold war. 84

But, it was the Truman Administration and not a group of military officers and their sympathizers who governed the United States, so that when a Security Council resolution offered the possibility of discussions with the Chinese, on how to end the Korean conflict the American representative to the United Nations voted for its adoption. On November 10, 1950, the Council with Russia's approval, decided "to invite, . . . a representative of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China to be present during discussions by the Council of the Special Report of the United Nations Command in Korea." 85 But this

84 Ibid., p. 6.
85 U.N., Department of Public Information, Yearbook of the United Nations, 1950, p. 239. This resolution was passed before there were any large military contacts made between the Chinese and United Nations forces.
diplomatic move did not deter the Chinese from mounting their first offensive of the conflict in which United Nations forces were tragically mauled. One consequence of this military action was the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly calling for the establishment of a committee to investigate the possibilities of a cease-fire.\textsuperscript{86} Such efforts proved fruitless as the Chinese were not inclined to think in terms of a cease-fire while their armies were advancing so rapidly. The almost frantic alarm of the West, emphasized by President Truman's mid-December declaration of a state of national emergency, undoubtedly encouraged Peking in its course. Peking's stand hardened even more when, just three weeks later, President Truman delivered his State of the Union message in which he appealed to the allies for additional military contributions for the Korean effort.\textsuperscript{87}

The Truman Administration, unlike MacArthur and his followers, realized that the West's plan to unify Korea militarily had to be abandoned, at least temporarily, in face of the Chinese onslaught. Although the effort to effect a cease-fire can be viewed, in part, as a plan

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p. 250. For Resolution of December 14, 1950, see Appendix A, p. 207.

\textsuperscript{87} U.S., Department of State, United States Policy in the Korean Conflict, p. 32.
for retaining whatever territory in North Korea that United Nations forces still held. But the Chinese advance, which continued for two months, soon removed the territorial basis for such an approach. When United Nations forces finally checked the Communist tide the new battle line was some fifty miles south of the 38th parallel.

During the period of Chinese advances the United Nations committee to investigate the possibility of a cease-fire, with Washington's blessings, stepped up its work. On January 11, the committee issued a supplementary report which was to be the basis for future consultations concerning the armistice. The report's main suggestions called for immediate negotiations to end the conflict, and the subsequent removal of all foreign troops from Korean soil. Two days later these suggestions, in the form of a resolution, were forwarded to Peking. From the Chinese Communist capital came the response that "the subject matter of the negotiations must include the withdrawal of the United States armed forces from Taiwan and the Taiwan Straits and Far Eastern related problems; . . . ." Soon after,

89 Ibid., p. 212.
another condition was added: "the definite affirmation of the legitimate status of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations must be insured." The high price the Chinese demanded for a cease-fire was undoubtedly related to the military advantages the Communists were enjoying in the field. There are also the possibilities that Peking believed the United Nations offer to be insincere, and/or that the Chinese wanted to unify Korea militarily under the Communist banner.

But the United Nations forces eventually halted the Chinese drive, and the Americans, in Korea and at home, immediately launched a military and diplomatic offensive. In Korea United Nations forces slowly but steadily pushed the Communists toward the 38th parallel and in some places into North Korea. In New York, the American representative to the United Nations, Warren Austin, also expressed a more offensive line: in late January he informed the Peking officials, "You can't shoot your way into the United Nations!" His remarks to the assembled delegates raised the question of the

90 Canada, Department of External Affairs, Documents on the Korean Crisis, p. 34. This new demand was delivered in a communiqué sent to the Indian Ambassador in Peking.

91 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 121.
feasibility of cease-fire overtures:

It is clear to us, as I am sure it is to most other members of the United Nations, that the Peiping reply is another rejection . . . . Would a further appeal contribute to the authority of the United Nations and the system of collective security?92

A few days later the General Assembly decided that the answer to Austin's question was no; by adopting a resolution condemning Communist China as an aggressor in Korea.93 But some of the Asian delegations were not enthusiastic about this action because they were not wholly convinced that Peking's motives were simply those of aggression, nor had they forgotten the rather questionable sanction given to the crossing of the 38th parallel by United Nations forces. Unlike these unenthusiastic delegates the nations contributing forces to the United Nations effort in Korea apparently had no such reservations. They formed the Committee of Sixteen which was to serve in an advisory capacity to the American Commander of the United Nations Command. Clearly one of its chief functions was to minimize the Chinese accusations that the Korean War was one of American imperialism, and it possibly also strengthened the unity of the United Nations forces.

92 Ibid.
93 U.N., Department of Public Information, Yearbook of the United Nations, 1951, pp. 224-225. For excerpts of Resolution of February 1, 1951, see Appendix A, pp. 207-208.
The differences of opinion between President Truman and General MacArthur became quite evident during March when the allies pressed Washington to make a serious attempt to end the fighting, now that the Chinese had been driven from South Korea. On March 20, MacArthur was ordered by the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff to stabilize his gains around the 38th parallel in order to be ready for a cease-fire. With a possible end to the war in sight Truman was about to tell the American people that "the Unified Command is prepared to enter into arrangements which would conclude the fighting and ensure against its resumption." But this address was never broadcast to the American public because on the day the speech was scheduled, MacArthur announced that a great United Nations offensive had been undertaken. Once again the General had ignored the orders of his superiors in Washington.

By this time President Truman was convinced of the necessity for MacArthur's removal and only sought an appropriate occasion. The General proved obliging when he addressed a letter to Republican Joseph W.

94Truman, p. 438.

95Ibid., p. 439.

96If the President had gone on with his speech it would have looked as if he did not want the United Nations to be victorious in Korea.
Martin, Jr., minority leader in the House. In response to Martin's proposal that Nationalist Chinese troops be used in Korea, MacArthur's letter, which Martin read to the House on April 5, informed the minority leader that:

Your view with respect to the utilization of the Chinese forces on Formosa is in conflict with neither logic nor this [American military] tradition.

It seems strongly difficult for some to realize that here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest, and we have joined the issue thus raised on the battlefield, that here we fight Europe's war with arms while the diplomats there still fight it with words, that if we lose the war to Communism in Asia the fall of Europe is inevitable, win it and Europe most probably would avoid war and yet persevere freedom.97

With this slur upon the Truman administration MacArthur had once again flouted the President's orders that American officials should: "exercise extreme caution in public statements, to clear all but routine statements with their departments, and to refrain from direct communication on military or foreign policy with newspapers, magazines, or other publicity media in the United States."98 Less than a week after MacArthur's letter became public, the President dismissed the General on the grounds "that military

97 Rovere and Schlesinger, p. 170.
98 Parks and Carosso, p. 375.
commanders must be governed by the policies and directives issued to them in the manner provided by our laws and Constitution."

MacArthur's return to the United States was a personal triumph. From the time he landed in San Francisco until he addressed a joint session of Congress the American people paid its respects to one of its great military heroes in an emotional outburst of unrivalled intensity. He responded by informing Congress and the American people that his plan for victory was the only sure way to peace. Later he told a Senate Committee, inquiring into the reasons for his removal, that "the military fortunes of America lay in the hands of men who understood little about the Pacific and practically nothing about Korea." But as MacArthur reiterated and elaborated his views to innumerable audiences the image of a great and unfallible general began "fading away." Perhaps it was a consequence of the slow realization by the American people that the proper leader of the allied forces in Korea was the President of the United States.

99 Wilcox and Kalijarui, p. 446.

The Coming of Peace

The period from June 24, 1951, to the conclusion of hostilities in Korea can be conveniently discussed under five main headings: the reasons for the initiation of the peace talks; the conversations at Kaesong; the problems hampering an agreement and leading to the cessation of talks at Kaesong; and the causes for the re-opening of discussions at Panmunjon.

After a year of chasing each other up and down the Korean peninsula the belligerents began to think seriously about finding a less costly way of ending the Korean War. By June, 1951, both sides had accomplished their respective immediate goals; the United Nations had repulsed the Communist invasion and were even holding some North Korean territory, while the Chinese, who had failed to dislodge the United Nations forces just north of the 38th parallel, had nevertheless been successful in stopping and subsequently routing an "imperialistic" American army. As the status quo of June 24, 1950, had almost been restored, neither the United States and its allies, nor the Chinese government wanted to chance extending the war in fear of precipitating a long and costly struggle. This had no appeal to the Truman Administration which was subject to increasing attacks by the American
people for its policy of limited war. It was a frustrating policy for a nation accustomed to fighting global conflicts in confident anticipation of presenting its defeated enemy with the terms of an unconditional surrender. Correspondingly in Peking the young Communist Government was not inclined to continue extracting needed money from its already depleted coffers.

While the United States and most of her allies did attempt to find peaceful ways to end the fighting, they were continuously pressured by Syngman Rhee who wanted nothing less than the unconditional surrender of all northern armies. To all members of the United Nations command, except Rhee, it was obvious that the plans for forcibly unifying Korea were costing the belligerents too much, in men, morale, and material. But to Rhee who had been fighting for Korean independence for over thirty years and for unification for six years, an end to the conflict was not welcome, especially as he now had the military and economic might of the strongest nation in the world defending his cause. It was this attitude of Rhee's that continued, for the next two years, to hamper allied attempts to end the war.

Rhee notwithstanding the Americans were determined to effect an armistice. This much is abundantly clear
in British Foreign Minister Anthony Eden's report to Churchill concerning his conversations with his American counterpart, Dean Acheson:

The Americans want an armistice and are prepared in order to get one to accept arrangements for a supervision which they fear will be unsatisfactory. But they feel bound to take precautions against infringements of the armistice in the form of a major attack by the communists, which they might not be able to foresee owing to inadequate supervision arrangements. Even so, like us, they doubt whether the communists will break the armistice, since they believe that the Chinese have had enough.

Finally, the Americans left me no doubt that the United States would rise in its wrath if there was a major attack. They clearly feel that the American Administration could not hold that position against the clamour of public opinion.

While both the United Nations Command and the Chinese wanted a truce, neither party offered a program for establishing peace talks. The initial move in bringing the common desire for a truce to the level of negotiations came on June 23, when the Russian representative to the United Nations, Jacob Malik, reported to the General Assembly that "the Soviet peoples . . . believe that the most acute problem of the present day--the problem of armed conflict in Korea . . . could be settled." 102 Two days later, whether by design or not, the Soviet viewpoint was

101 Eden, pp. 16-17.
102 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 125.
e agreed in the People's Daily of Peking.\textsuperscript{103} While Washington realized that China, assisted by Russia, had offered the United Nations Command a peace overture, American officials were at first hesitant about the proposal. In order to seek clarification on Malik's statement, the American Ambassador in Moscow approached the Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko on June 28. During the ensuing conversation the latter indicated that Malik had suggested that possibly negotiations for a cease-fire could be carried on by the four respective field commanders of the United Nations Command, the Republic of South Korea, the Chinese, and the North Koreans.\textsuperscript{104}

The American response was immediate. The following day the State Department ordered the new United Nations Commander, General Matthew E. Ridgway to contact the enemy leaders and to take the appropriate steps for establishing negotiations, but not to imperil the American position in any way.\textsuperscript{105} After acknowledging his orders, Ridgway, on June 30, made a radio broadcast

\textsuperscript{103}Truman, p. 456.

\textsuperscript{104}U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 126.

\textsuperscript{105}Truman, p. 459.
directed at the North Korean and Chinese commanders in which he stated: "I am informed that you may wish a meeting to discuss an armistice providing for the cessation of hostilities and all acts of armed force in Korea, with adequate guarantees for the maintenance of such armistice." Acceptance by the Communists was almost instantaneous.

The peace negotiations commenced on July 10, at the border town of Kaesong, 40 miles north-west of Seoul, in North Korea. As suggested by the Soviets the participants of the talks were from the United States, South Korea, China, and North Korea. Newsmen from all over the world were in attendance, but there were no official representatives from any of the remaining fourteen countries which had contributed forces to the United Nations Command.

The initial barrier obstructing serious discussions was the establishment of a demarcation line, the Americans demanded the use of the battle lines which in most cases, were north of the 38th parallel; while the Chinese wanted the division along the 38th. In the end the

106 Ibid., p. 458.
107 The United States contingent included Vice Admiral C. Turner Joy, Rear Admiral Arleigh Burke, Major General L. C. Craigie (Army) and, Major General H. I. Hodges (Army).
United States was to get its way on this point as the remainder of the war produced no significant geographical change despite much bloody fighting like the battle of Porkchop Hill.

To talk is one thing, but to agree is another problem entirely, and there were many differences of opinion which hampered significant agreements at Kaesong. Even after the belligerents acknowledged the battle-lines as the possible future demarcation line they differed on where subsequent talks should be held, and what should be done with the prisoners-of-war. Although the site of the negotiations was in North Korean territory the American representatives were determined to keep the area neutral which meant the exclusion of Communist troops. But the Chinese had other ideas. Consequently the American delegation called for the selection of a new site for the truce conversations.

Another problem which plagued the Kaesong talks dealt with the post-war handling of prisoners-of-war. The United Nations Command proposed that all captured soldiers be given their choice on the question of repatriation, while the Chinese believed that their United Nations captured troops were not properly educated to make the choice between the promises of immediate material wealth which America offered, and
the promised future prosperity of the new socialist state. When the impasse reached at Kaesong could not be breached the first truce talks were terminated on August 23.

While fighting persisted throughout the period of the truce talks each side seemed more concerned with maintaining its position, than with intensifying its efforts. But when the Kaesong talks had ended the fighting took on more serious preparations and the battle of Bloody Ridge, which raged into October, precipitated efforts to reopen the peace talks. Both sides feared that the fighting might mushroom into an entirely new war if the belligerents did not return to the conference tables. Therefore contacts were made, and on October 10, the talks reconvened. Although they were temporarily halted when the United Nations Air Force made an over-zealous attack on a Chinese position, apologies were made and the negotiations were resumed.

Before the representatives actually developed concrete plans for an armistice they had to deal with three main problems: where to have the new talks; where to establish a demarcation line; and what to do about the prisoners-of-war problem? During the latter months of 1951, the belligerents were able to solve the first two problems but remained stalemated on the
last. The talks were moved from Keasong to Panmunjon, which was just south of the 38th parallel in the "no-
mans land" between the opposing front lines. Working
from a basis provided by a General Assembly resolution
the negotiations reached agreement on a demarcation
line to be established along the battlelines as of the
day of cease-fire.108 But the prisoner-of-war question
again proved a stumbling block as the Chinese would not
agree to an exchange formula that allowed the prisoners
the choice of repatriation. As happened before and
as it was to happen again, the peace talks stagnated
and collapsed.

American attempts to end the war through nego-
tiation suffered not only because of the differing
opinions of the belligerents, but also because of policy
disagreements between the United States and Korea.

108 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean
Unification, pp. 127-128. The belligerents agreed that
"hostilities were to continue until a military armistice
agreement was signed, and if it took more than 30 days
to conclude the armistice agreement, the military demar-
cation line for the duration of the armistice was to
follow the actual line of contact between the opposing
forces immediately prior to the signature of the armis-
tice. A demilitarized zone but also provided for.
"But the Communists rejected" the principle of volun-
tary repatriation of prisoners of war, as well as ...
the application of repatriation to prisoners held
by the U.N. Command whose residence had been in the
Republic of Korea." U.S., Department of State, A
Historical Summary of United States--Korean Relations,
pp. 100, 102.
Rhee's determination to continue the war until victory was complete and Korea unified under his leadership placed the American spokesmen at Kaesong and Panmunjom in a difficult situation; a solution acceptable to Rhee was unacceptable to the Communists, and one which satisfied the Communists would be rejected by Rhee. Various overtures were made to the truculent Korean president in order to reduce his opposition to a negotiated peace. In spite of Washington's pledges for the post-war period of safeguarding the republic's independence and of bolstering its economy Rhee refused to alter his stand. Consequently because of disagreements between friend and foe, an armistice was still unrealized by the end of 1952.

By now the failure to reach a settlement in Korea weighed heavily upon the frustrated American public which had expressed their disapproval of the war in November by giving the Republican presidential candidate, Dwight D. Eisenhower, a landslide victory. Fulfilling a campaign promise president-elect Eisenhower visited Korea in December searching for a solution to end the war. But he found no new or quick remedies and his administration followed much the same course as its

---

predecessor, finding it equally difficult to resolve the old problems.

One of the primary reasons for the failure of the Eisenhower administration to develop a new policy was the disagreement between the President and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, over the proper course to follow in Korea. Dulles' predilection for statements expressing an extremely "hard line" against the Communists, such as: "I don't think we can get much out of a Korean settlement until we have shown --before all Asia--our clear superiority by giving the Chinese one hell of a licking," encouraged Rhee to continue his adamant opposition to a negotiated peace. Although Eisenhower might have been in sympathy with the sentiment in Dulles' remarks, he was aware that such an approach was highly impractical for achieving a prompt settlement. Furthermore it made the task of pacifying Rhee and obtaining his acquiescence to the American policy of a negotiated peace even more difficult.

One of the first attempts by the Eisenhower administration to soften Rhee's unflexible opposition to American policy was the appointment of a retired American

---

general and a long time friend of the Korean president, John B. Coulter, to head the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency. But this action produced no visible results; neither did Eisenhower's promise of a mutual defense treaty between Washington and Seoul.

Rhee's response was hardly encouraging: first an attempt was made to delay or destroy the peace negotiations by the dramatic release of twenty-seven thousand North Korean prisoners-of-war from United Nations compounds guarded by South Korean troops; and then by Rhee's condemnation of the proposed armistice terms. In response to President Eisenhower's plea for an end to the fighting, Rhee replied:

The terms of the armistice being what they are, the Communist buildup will go on unhampered until it is capable of overwhelming South Korea with one swoop of the Communist's own choosing. What is to follow for the rest of the Far East? And the rest of Asia? And the rest of the free world?

Rhee eventually gave in to American pressures and promises but he refused to sign the armistice agreement and technically the Republic of Korea is still at

111 Lyons, p. 218.

112 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 130.

113 U.S., Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Korean Problem, p. 87.
war with the Communist Chinese and North Korean governments.

With the problem of Rhee resolved, the delegates at Panmunjon were now able to give their undivided attention to the task of working out an agreement that would produce a cease-fire. Finally, after much hesitation, the Communists accepted a United Nations compromise plan for dealing with the troublesome prisoners-of-war issue: prisoners would be interrogated before a committee of representatives from neutral and belligerent countries; then they could make their choice as to where they wanted to go. This plan was wholeheartedly sanctioned by the Allies. The Communists now had the choice of either continuing the murderous battle or allowing their captured soldiers the option of returning to their respective homeland, or of going to another country. Thus, after three years, one month, and two days, the Korean war was brought to a halt. The armistice called for a demarcation line and a demilitarized zone; a Military Armistice Commission consisting of representatives from the one-time belligerents; and a Neutral United Nations Supervisory Commission; 114 all attempting to prevent any future wars in Korea.

Although peace had returned and the south Koreans had gained a little land, the economic and political instability of the immediate post-war period was quite similar to that which existed before the war, except in a larger sense, something had been accomplished.

For as was pointed out by Anthony Eden in his Memoirs:
"The fighting in Korea achieved a balance of power recognized and respected as such."¹¹⁵ This "balance" was further emphasized when the Allies reassured the world that Korea would now, and forever, be well defended against acts of aggression. Unlike the bewildered League of Nations, the United Nations had acted and had demonstrated that collective security could be effective. President Eisenhower was quick to emphasize this point with his remark that "in this struggle we have seen the United Nations meet the challenge of aggression—not with pathetic words of protest, but with deeds of decisive purpose."¹¹⁶ To put strength into these words the sixteen countries who had contributed forces to the United Nations Command warned the Communists that, "in the interest of world peace, that

¹¹⁵Eden, p. 28.
¹¹⁶U.S., Department of State, Armistice in Korea, p. 1.
if there is a renewal of the armed attack, challenging again the principles of the United Nations, we should again be united and prompt to resist."117 But despite the overtones of success in such remarks, western officials knew that the supposedly untrained Chinese Communist army had successfully stood up against the mightiest of nations. For the West the outcome of the war seemed more a compromise than a victory. Although both sides had made gains, most of which were psychological, the critical question was which side had most impressed world opinion, particularly in the uncommitted nations?

Although their latest attempt to unify Korea had failed, American policy-makers looked to the future for another chance, if such a possibility should again present itself. But it was abundantly clear that unification along the lines envisaged by the United States would have to be prefaced by a strengthening of the Republic of Korea. The first step in this direction came eleven days after the signing of the armistice when Secretary Dulles and President Rhee jointly announced that:

Our Governments will promptly negotiate agreements to cover the status of such forces.

---

117 U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, p. 132.
as the United States may elect to maintain in Korea after the mutual defense treaty comes into force and effect, and the availability to them of Korean facilities and services needed for the discharge of our common task.\textsuperscript{118}

Washington not only kept its military promises made to Rhee prior to the latter's acceptance of the cease-fire but also adhered to its promises of economic assistance.

Another approach to the problem of unification was taken at the Geneva Conference in the spring of 1954. The Geneva negotiators, consisting of representatives from the Soviet Union and all the nations which had military forces in the Korean War with the exception of the Union of South Africa, sought to develop a modus vivendi for uniting the peninsula, but their efforts ended in utter failure. The proposal offered by each side had a familiar pre-war ring and, as before, they were unacceptable to the other side. Seemingly the war had solved nothing, nor changed anyone's attitude. To the Communists the United States and its allies were still "imperialists," and to the West the Communists were still "aggressors."\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{118}Ibid., p. 133. For excerpts from the mutual defense treaty see Appendix A, p. 208-210.

So it becomes quite obvious that the United States was once again saddled with the defense of south Korea, but now there was no question of pulling out as suggested in the late forties. South Korea now represented a concrete symbol of the success of collective security, and to abandon it, would only result in the loss of face of the United States and the United Nations. Yet to continue defending the Republic of Korea against its internal and external enemies cost the United States dearly. The consequences of such an expensive policy were clearly described by military strategist, S. L. A. Marshall when he wrote:

The conditions of the truce keep a U.S. army corps, with attendant air support, tied to ground which is valueless. Korea is the sump pit in the U.S. outpost line. The Allies we get by being there have little weight. The troops we have there are unavailable for use to stop a brush fire elsewhere.\(^{121}\)

Looking back to the days of Theodore Roosevelt it becomes quite clear that Washington's attitude towards Korea has reversed itself: no longer were American interests in Korea so insignificant that American policy

---

\(^{120}\) While American troops were not used to put down internal disorders they did relieve Korean security forces from their military responsibilities in order to allow the swift transfer of these forces to the turbulent areas in question.

\(^{121}\) S. L. A. Marshall, "Big Little War," Army X (June, 1960), 25.
makers could acquiesce in the domination of that area by another nation. Now Korea had become an advance post of considerable significance in the American attempt to contain communism. Furthermore China's explosion of an atomic bomb, and Peking's conviction that social revolution can only be achieved through war has only served to strengthen the American view. For not only has Korea strategic significance in a possible, future Chinese Communist invasion on Japan, but also if the "domino theory"\textsuperscript{122} has any validity it is essential that the first domino not be allowed to fall.

\textsuperscript{122}The "domino theory" is that if one country in Asia falls to the Communists the rest of Asia, like a row of upright dominoes, will do likewise.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Looking back, American policy concerning Korea can be divided into two periods; the era of the "Open Door", 1834-1943, and the era of American commitment, 1943-1954. Neither of the two periods produced a successful American policy—the United States was to be condemned by both friends and foes.

The failures of the "Open Door" in Korea is clearly evident by the negligible growth in trade between the two countries, and Washington's inability to comprehend its responsibilities as a rising world leader. In so far as the policy came under challenge the United States was disinclined to take any action beyond moral suasion or verbal condemnation to maintain its policy. As George Kennan, an eminent American diplomat and scholar has written:

We were at liberty to exhort, to plead, to hamper, to embarrass. If others failed to heed us, we would cause them to appear in ungraceful postures before the eyes of the world opinion. If, on the other hand, they gave heed to our urgings, they would do so at their own risk; we would not feel bound to help them with the resulting problems—they were on their own. 1

There were three reasons for the American acknowledgement of Japanese ascendancy in Korea in 1905: the anticipated trade with Korea was never achieved; the Americans assumed that the Japanese would safeguard what little trade they had with the Koreans; and President Roosevelt believed that the Japanese were best suited to guide the Koreans toward a higher political and economic plane. But events proved these assumptions wrong. By the Cairo Declaration of 1943, Washington acknowledged that its earlier policy had failed—American commercial interests had been pushed out of Korea, and the Koreans were in no better political or economic state than they had been in 1905.

With the Cairo Declaration the United States launched a new policy with regards to Korea—it now committed itself to the establishment of the independence of Korea after a period of trusteeship. The Cairo Declaration clearly indicated, in its details and by its implications, that both the United States and the Soviet Union anticipated expanding their influence in that part of Asia where the envisaged defeat of Japan would create a power vacuum. The Cairo statement may have implied a sense of partnership in this understanding but events were to prove otherwise. As the colonial powers had been drastically weakened
by the war it was not surprising that the two super-
states became rivals in Asia; a rivalry that was
accentuated by the ideological differences between
the two nations. Each believed that its political
and economic systems provided the best means for the
development of the territory in question. Both sought
to enlist the revolutionary aspirations of Asians on
their side by promises of a bright future, exemplified
by Roosevelt's Four Freedoms Speech on one hand, and
the Marxist doctrine concerning the future of the
working class on the other.

The post-war political chess game between Russia
and the United States was never static as the Americans
moved into world leadership and the Soviets sought to
displace, or, at least, to rival them. When dealing with
Korea, the United States found in the United Nations
and in Syngman Rhee, two diverse but willing allies who
were sincere enemies of Communism; Rhee, because of his
conservatism, and his desire to head a unified and
independent Korea; and the United Nations because the
political beliefs of a majority of its members were
opposed to Communism. But neither the United States
and its allies, nor Russia, were able to induce the
other to leave Korea. When the problem was passed
on to native nationalists in the respective zones
the results were no better.

The founding of the Republic of South Korea and the concurrent use of the United Nations were moves introduced into the political game by the Washington government. Realizing the moral and diplomatic capabilities of the United Nations, Washington sought to utilize the world organization's machinery to implement American foreign policy. From 1947 to 1953 the United States made good use of the facilities of the United Nations, to enhance the moral stature of its policies in Korea.

During the Korean War, the United States was led by two factions; those who feared possible Chinese or even Russian intervention and a subsequent World War; and those who believed that the United States was capable of handling any military situation. President Truman, his cabinet, and the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff would fight only if the future did not involve World War III, while a group of military men and civilians, led by General MacArthur, asserted that American forces could defeat the Communists in Asia without provoking Russian intervention. Although Truman entered the war without the formal consent of Congress, he would not push the American people into a possible world holocaust. He felt that Korea was a testing ground for the principle of collective security and the American policy of
containment; and as shown by his orders to MacArthur, the President did not want to provoke Russia, or the Chinese, into active participation in Korea.

Opponents of the Truman administration, such as Wisconsin's Senator Joseph McCarthy, attacked its Korean policies, and not only suggested, but accused the administration of harbouring Communist sympathizers. To this charge was also added one that the President was listening to advisors who knew nothing of the Korean situation, and was stifling the freedom of action of such prominent military leaders as MacArthur. It is true that Washington was carefully watching the Korean situation, but the charge of restricting the military only magnifies the differences in opinion of the two factions. For even with the election of Eisenhower, the White House's attitude towards the war did not change.

While officials differed on methods, all agreed that they were fighting a Communist attempt to penetrate the "democratic" world, which was a part of the Communist drive toward world leadership. Nobody believed that the war might have been the results of national aspirations on the part of the Korean people. No one remembered that when Korean nationalists asked for assistance in the 1890's, and again in 1919,
Washington ignored their pleas. Contemporary American policy in Korea seems to be of a negative nature for the peninsula only attains importance when the possibility arises that Korea might be used as a springboard, either strategically or symbolically, for a further extension of Communist power. In 1950 the valuable area was Japan, today it is the whole of Asia.
APPENDIX A

PERTINENT DOCUMENTS ON KOREA, 1945-1953

Moscow Communiqué of December 27, 1945¹ (Excerpts)

III

Korea:

"1. With a view to the re-establishment of Korea as an independent state, the creation of conditions for developing the country on democratic principles ... there shall be set up a provisional Korean democratic government ... .

"2. In order to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government and with a view to the preliminary elaboration of the appropriate measures, there shall be established a Joint Commission consisting of the representatives of the United States command in southern Korea and the Soviet command in northern Korea. In preparing their proposals the Commission shall consult with the Korean democratic parties and social organizations. The recommendations worked out by the

¹U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, pp. 47-48. The foreign ministers who attended the Moscow Conference were V. M. Molotov, Russia; Ernest Bevin, England; and James F. Byrnes, United States.
Commission shall be presented for the consideration of the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, the United Kingdom and the United States prior to final decision by the two governments represented on the Joint Commission.

"3. It shall be the task of the Joint Commission, with the participation of the provisional Korean democratic government and of the Korean democratic organizations to work out measures also for helping and assisting (trusteeship) the political, economic and social progress of the Korean people, the development of democratic self-government and the establishment of the national independence of Korea.

"4. [A] conference of the representatives of the United States and Soviet commands in Korea shall be convened within a period of two weeks ...

General Assembly Resolution of November 14, 1947
(Excerpts)

"The General Assembly

"1. Resolves that the elected representatives of the Korean people be invited to take part in the consideration of the question;

"2. Further resolves that in order to facilitate and expedite such participation and to observe that the Korean representatives are in fact duly elected by the Korean people ... there be forthwith established a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea, to be present in Korea, with right to travel, observe and consult throughout Korea.

B

"The General Assembly,

"Recognizing the urgent and rightful claims to independence of the people of Korea;

.......

"1. Decides that the Commission shall consist of representatives of Australia, Canada, China, El Salvador, France, India, Philippines, Syria, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic;

"2. Recommends that the elections be held not later than 31 March 1948 ... The number of representatives from each voting area or zone should be proportionate to the population, and the elections should be under the observation of the Commission;

.......

"
"The Purposes of the United Nations are:

1. To maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace, and to bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace;

Security Council Resolution of June 25, 1950

"The Security Council

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

"Noting with grave concern the armed attack upon the Republic of Korea by forces from North Korea, ...

"Determines that this action constitutes a breach of peace,

"I. Calls for the immediate cessation of hostilities; and calls upon the authorities of North Korea to withdraw forthwith their armed forces to the

---

3U.N., Department of Public Information, Yearbook of the United Nations, 1950, p. 222. On June 25, 1950, the Security Council members were China, Egypt, Ecuador, Norway, Cuba, India, France, United Kingdom, United States, Yugoslavia, and Russia who was absent.
38th parallel;

"III. Calls upon all Members to render every assistance to the United Nations in the execution of this resolution and to refrain from giving any assistance to the North Korean authorities."

Article 41 of the United Nations Charter

"The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.

Article 42 of the United Nations Charter

"Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations."
Article 2, Clause 5 of the United Nations Charter

"All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.

Security Council Resolution of June 27, 1950⁴
(Excerpts)

"The Security Council,

.......

"Having noted from the report of the United Nations Commission in Korea that the authorities in North Korea have neither ceased hostilities nor withdrawn their armed forces to the 38th parallel and that urgent military measures are required to restore international peace and security; and

"Having noted the appeal from the Republic of Korea to the United Nations for immediate and effective steps to secure peace and security,

"Recommends that the Members of the United Nations furnish such assistance to the Republic of Korea as may be necessary to repel the armed attack and to restore international peace and security in that area."

⁴Ibid., p. 224.
Security Council Resolution of July 7, 1950
(Excerpts)

"The Security Council,

3. Recommends that all Members providing military
forces and other assistance pursuant to the aforesaid
Security Council resolutions make such forces and other
assistance available to a unified command under the
United States.

5. Authorizes the unified command at its discretion
to use the United Nations flag in the course of operations
against North Korean forces concurrently with the flags
of the various nations participating;

6. Requests the United States to provide the
Security Council with reports as appropriate on the
course of action taken under the unified command."

United States Resolution in the Security Council,
July 31, 1950

"The Security Council

"Condemns the North Korean authorities for their
continued defiance of the United Nations;

5Ibid., p. 230.
6U.S., Department of State, United States Policy
in the Korean Conflict, p. 11. This resolution was
vetoed by the Soviet Union on September 6, 1950.
"Calls upon all States to use their influence to prevail upon the authorities of North Korea to cease this defiance;

"Calls upon all States to refrain from assisting or encouraging the North Korean authorities and to refrain from action which might lead to the spread of the Korean conflict to other areas and thereby further endanger international peace and security."

General Assembly Resolution of October 7, 1950? (Excerpts)

"The General Assembly,

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

"1. Recommends that

"(a) All appropriate steps be taken to insure conditions of stability throughout Korea;

"(b) All constituent acts be taken, including the holding of elections, under the auspices of the United Nations, for the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government in the sovereign State of Korea;

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

"(e) All necessary measures be taken to accomplish the economic rehabilitation of Korea;

. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ."

General Assembly Resolution of December 1, 1950

(Excerpts)

A

"The General Assembly,

1. Establishes the United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) under the direction of a United Nations Agent-General,

4. Directs the Agent-General:

(a) To co-ordinate his programme with measures taken by the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea to carry out the recommendations of the General Assembly relating to the establishment of a unified, independent and democratic government in Korea, and support the Commission in fulfilling the task:

(b) To provide for the procurement and shipment of supplies and services and for their effective distribution and utilization within Korea;

14. Calls upon all government, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations, pending the beginning of operations by the United Nations Korean

\[8^{\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 280.}\]
Reconstruction Agency, to continue to furnish through the Secretary-General such assistance for the Korean people as may be requested by the Unified Command.

"... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... "

General Assembly Resolution of December 14, 1950

"The General Assembly

"Viewing with great concern the situation in the Far East, anxious that immediate steps should be taken to prevent the conflict in Korea spreading to other areas and to put an end to the fighting in Korea..."

"Request the President of the General Assembly to constitute a group of three persons, including himself, to determine the basis on which a satisfactory cease-fire in Korea can be arranged and to make recommendations to the General Assembly as soon as possible."

General Assembly Resolution of February 1, 1951 (Excerpts)

"The General Assembly,

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

---

9Ibid., p. 250. By this resolution a committee, composed of Lester B. Pearson (Canada), Sir Bengal Rau (India), and N. Entezam (Iran), was established.

10U.N., Department of Public Information, Yearbook of the United Nations, 1951, pp. 224-225. The members of this committee were N. Entezam (Iran), Sven Grofstrom (Sweden), and Luis Padillo Nervo (Mexico).
"1. Finds that the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, by giving direct aid and assistance to those who were already committing aggression in Korea and by engaging in hostilities against United Nations forces there has itself engaged in aggression in Korea;

"2. Calls upon the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China to cause its forces and nationals in Korea to cease hostilities against the United Nations forces and to withdraw from Korea;

"5. Calls upon all States and authorities to refrain from giving any assistance to the aggressors in Korea;

"6. Requests a Committee composed of the members of the Collective Measures Committee as a matter of urgency to consider additional measures to be employed to meet this aggression and report thereon to the General Assembly, . . ."

American-Korean Mutual Defense Treaty
October 1, 1953
(Excerpts)

U.S., Department of State, The Record on Korean Unification, pp. 150-152.
Article II

"The parties will consult together whenever, in the opinion of either of them, the political independence or security of either of the Parties is threatened by external armed attack. . . .

Article III

"Each party recognizes that an armed attack in the Pacific area on either of the Parties . . . would be dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.

. . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Article VI

"This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely. Either Party may terminate it one year after the notice has been given to the other Party.

[Amended by the United States' Senate]

"It is the understanding of the United States that neither party is obligated, under Article III of the above Treaty, to come to the aid of the other except in case of an external attack against such party; nor shall anything in the present Treaty be construed as requiring the United States to give assistance to Korea except in the event of an armed attack against territory which has been recognized by
the United States as lawfully brought under the administra
tive control of the Republic of Korea.
APPENDIX B

Major United States Officials During the Korean Conflict

Cabinet

President - Harry S. Truman

Secretary of State - Dean G. Acheson

Secretary of Defense - Louis Johnson (to September, 1950)
  General George C. Marshall
  (September, 1950 to September, 1951)
  Robert A. Lovett

Secretary of the Army - Frank C. Pace, Jr.

Secretary of the Air Force - Thomas K. Finletter

Secretary of the Navy - Francis Matthews (to July, 1951)
  Dan A. Kimball

Joint Chiefs-of-Staff

Chairman - General Omar N. Bradley

Chief of Naval Operations - Admiral Forrest Sherman
  (died 1951)
  Admiral William M. Fechteler

Air Force Chief-of-Staff - General Hoyt S. Vandenberg

Army Chief-of-Staff - General J. Lawton Collins

General of the Army - General Douglas MacArthur

Commanding General of U.S. Eighth Army
  and Field Commander in Korea - Lieutenant General
  Walton H. Walker

---

12 Marshall, 38.
Eighth Army Commanders

Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker - June 25 to December, 1950

Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway - December, 1950 to April, 1951

Lieutenant General James Van Fleet - April, 1951 to March, 1953

Lieutenant General Maxwell B. Taylor - March, 1953...

United Nations Commanders

General Douglas MacArthur - June, 1950 to April, 1951

General Matthew B. Ridgeway - April, 1951 to April, 1952

General Mark W. Clark - April, 1952...
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Materials

Public Documents


Documents on the Korean Crisis. Ottawa: King's Printer and Controller of Stationary, 1951.


Other Documents:


Books


Periodicals


Secondary Materials

Books


Periodicals


Grajdanzev, Andrew J. "Korea Divided," Far Eastern Survey, XIV (October 10, 1945), 281-284.


"The Occupation of Korea," Foreign Policy Reports, XXIII (October 15, 1947), 186-195.


Stevenson, Charles S. "D + 10 Years," Army, X (June, 1960), 63-65.

Stewart, Maxwell S. "Blunder in Korea," Nation, CIXVI (May 22, 1948), 569-571.


Unpublished Material